GOOD CONSCIENCE,

OR,

A TREATISE SHEWING THE

Nature, Meanes, Markes, Benefit, and Neceſsitie *thereof.*

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BY

IER: DYKE, Miniſter of Gods *Word at Epping in Eſſex.*

The Sixth Edition corrected.

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One thing is neceſſarie.

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TO THE RIGHT Worshipfull, Sir FRANCIS BARRINGTON, Knight and *Baronet, a Patron and pattern of Pietie and good Conscience.*

RIGHT WORSHIPFVL,

THat which the Apostle *Paul* speakes of a mans desire of the office of a Bishop, may be truly spoken of every one who desires to gaine men to the love of a good Conscience, that *hee desires a worthy Worke*: Yea, it is the worke which is, and ought to bee made the scope and drift of the worthy worke of the Ministery. And therefore it is, that he, that desires the calling of the Ministerie, desires a worthy worke, because of this worthy worke of bringing men to good Conscience, A worke at which all worke; and books should specially ayme: Conscience is a book, one of those books that shall be opened at the last day, and to which men shall be put, and by which they

Vnicuique liber est propria conscientia, & ad hunc librum diiudiendus & emendandum omnes alij inveniantur, Hom. de Conf.

they ſhall be judged. Therefore to the directing, informing, and amending of this booke ſhould all other bookes ſpecially tend. Yea *Salomon* ſeemes to call men off from all other bookes, and ſtudies, to the ſtudy of this ſo neceſſary a point, the keeping of a good Conſcience: Eccleſ. 12. 12, 13. *Of making many bookes,* (ſaith he) *there is no end, and much ſtudy is a wearineſſe of the fleſh; Let us heare the concluſion of the whole matter, Feare God and keep his Commandements; for this is the whole dutie of man.* As if his advice tended to this, to neglect all ſtudies in compariſon of that ſtudy which aimes at the getting & keeping of a good Conſcience. It would be exceeding happy with us, if this ſtudy were more in requeſt amongſt us. Wee ſeeme to live in thoſe dayes fore-told by the Prophet, wherein Iſa. 11. 9. *the earth ſhould bee filled with the knowledge of the Lord.* We are bleſſed that live in ſo cleare a Sunneſhine of Gods truth, but yet the griefe is, that through our owne default, our Sunſhine is but like the winter light, all light, little or no heate, and we make no other uſe of our light, but onely to ſee by, not to walke and work by. In the firſt re-entrance of the Goſpell amongſt us, how devout;

devout, holy, zealous, and men renowned for Conſcience were our Martyrs, and our firſt Planters, Preachers, & profeſſors of Religion? They had not generally the knowledge and learning, the world now hath, nor the world now the Conſcience they then had. There bee now better Scholers, there were then better Men: they were as excellent for Devotion, as our Times are for Diſputation. It is an excellent ſight to ſee ſuch Chriſtians as were the Romanes; *Full of goodneſſe, filled with all Knowledge.* It is pitty that ever ſo lovely a paire ſhould be ſundred. Yet if they be parted, it is beſt being without that which with moſt ſafetie may be ſpared. A good Conſcience is ſure to doe well, though it want the accompliſhment of Learning, and greater meaſures of Knowledge and Vnderſtanding. But take Learning from a good Conſcience, and it is but a Ring of gold in a Swines ſnout; or that which is worſe, *A thorne in a Drunkards hand.* Learning is to bee highly apprized; Riches, Honours, and all other earthly bleſſings are vile to it. But yet though it take place of all other things, yet muſt it give good Conſcience the wall and upper-hand, as

Antiqua ſapientia nihil aliud quam facienda & vitãda præcepit, & tũc longe meliores erant viri. Poſtquã docti prodierunt, boni defunt. Simplex enim illa & aperta virtus in obſcuram & ſolertem ſcientiam verſa eſt, docerumque diſputare non vivere, *Seneca. epiſt. 56.*

Rom. 15. 14

Prov. 26. 9.

that which is farre before it in worth, vse, and neceſſitie. As *Salomon* of wiſdome, ſo
Prov. 3. 15. may it be ſaid of good Conſcience, *Shee is more pretious than Rubies, and all the things thou canſt deſire are not to be compared to her.* Gold and Rubies cannot ſo enrich a man as good Conſcience doth, and yet alas the blindneſſe of men, how willing are they in this caſe, with *a wilfull povertie?* Not Rubies, but handfulls of Barley, morſels of Bread, and Cruſts are preferred before the invaluable treaſure of a good Conſcience.

After the many worthy endeavours therefore of ſo many as have bin before me in this worke of labouring men to a good conſcience; I have adventured alſo to lend my weake ſtrength to the ſame worke. If one or two witneſſes prevaile not, yet who knows what an whole *cloud* may doe? Though *Eliah* and *Eliſha* bee the *Horſemen and Chariots of Iſrael*, yet the Footmen do their ſervice in the battell, and *Apollo* may without offence *water*, where *Paul* hath *planted*.

Now theſe my poore endeavours ſuch as they are, I am bold to publiſh under your Worſhipfull name, and to put them foorth under your Patronage, entreating you

you to countenance that in a Treatiſe, which you have ſo long countenanced in the practiſe. None ſo fit to bee a Patron of a Treatiſe of good Conſcience, as he that hath bin a religious both profeſſor, & protector of the practiſe therof. To haue a *Naile faſtned in a ſure place, the antiquity* of a long ſtanding *Name*, and *Family*, to be hewen out of the Quarry of the beſt Stocks of Parentage, to have faire Lines, and a faire lot in outward poſſeſſions, to be bleſſed with a fruitfull Vine, and Olive plants, fairely growne and planted round about a man, all theſe are to bee held high honors, and great favours from the God of heaven. And with all theſe hath the Lord honoured your ſelfe. But yet your greateſt honour that hath given luſtre to all the reſt, hath bin your love to the Truth, Religion, and a good Conſcience. *Auguſtine* repented him that he attributed more to *Mallius Theodorus*, to whom he wrote a booke, than he ſhould have done, though otherwiſe hee were a learned and Chriſtian man. A man may eaſily overſhoot himſelfe in the commẽdation of a good man, eſpecially, if a great man. It ſhall ſuffice therfore to have ſaid ſo little, and that to this end, that hereby, the

Iſa. 22. 23.

Diſplicet antẽ illic quod *Mallio Theodoro*, adquem librum ipſum ſcripſi, quãvis doctο & Chriſtiano viro plus tribui quam deberem. *Aug. Retr. lib. 1. cap. 2.*

the World may know the reaſon of my choice of your Patronage of this Treatiſe. It would have bin an incongruity to have had the name of a perſon of an evill Conſcience, prefixed before a booke of good Conſcience. I deſired a Patron ſutable to my ſubject. I preſume the very ſubject ſhall make the Treatiſe welcome to you: Be you pleaſed to afford your acceptance, as I will afford you my poore prayers, that the Lord who hath already ſet upon your head the *crowne of the Elders, Childrens Children*, and one *Crowne of glory* here one earth, *Age found in the wayes of righteouſnes*, would alſo in his due time give you that incorruptible *crowne of righteouſnes, and eternall glory* in the heavens, which that righteous Judge ſhall give to you, and to all thoſe that in the wayes of a good Conſcience waite for the bleſſed appearance of the Lord Ieſus.

Prov. 17. c.

Prov. 16. 1.

Your Worſhips in all

Chriſtian obſervance:

IER: DYKE.

The Text containes thee Maine Heads.

The first maine head. Pauls *Protestation of a good Conscience, where five things are considered.*

1. *What Conscience is.*
2. *What a good Conscience is. It is good with a twofold goodnesse.*
   1. *With the goodnesse of Integritie, and this integrity is threefold.*
      1. *When being rightly principled by the Word, it sincerely judges and determines of good & evill.*
      2. *When it doth excuse for good, and accuse for evill.*
      3. *When it urges to good, & restraines from evil.*
   2. *With the goodnesse of Tranquillitie, and peace. Here are three sorts of Conscience discovered not to be good, viz.*
      1. *The Ignorant*
      2. *The Secure*
      3. *The Seared*

      } *Conscience.*
3. *The means of getting & keeping a good Conscience.*
   1. *To get and keepe the Conscience good, peaceably, or with the goodnesse of peace, three things required,*
      1. *Faith in Christs blood.*
      2. *Repentance from dead workes.*
      3. *The conscionable exercise of Prayer.*
   2. *To get and keepe the Conscience good with the goodnesse of integrity, and to have it uprightly good, five things required, viz.*
      1. *Walking before God.*
      2. *Framing ones Course by the Rule of the Word.*
      3. *Frequent examination of the Conscience.*
      4. *Hearkning to the voice of Conscience.*
      5. *In cases of questionable nature, to take the surest and the safest side.*
4. *The markes and notes of a good Conscience: and they be seven.*
   1. *To make Conscience of all sinnes and duties.*
   2. *To make Conscience of small sinnes, & duties.*
   3. *To effect a Ministery that speakes to the Conscience.*

4. *To*

4. To doe duties, and avoid sin for Conscience sake.
5. Holy boldnesse.
6. To suffer for Conscience.
7. Constancie, and perseverance in Good.

5. The Motives to a good Conscience, and they are five.
1. The incomparable comfort and benefit of it in all such times and cases as all other comforts faile a man, and wherein a man stands most in need of comfort. The Cases or times are five.
1. The Time, and case of Disgrace and Reproach.
2. The Time of common feare, & cõmon calamity
3. The Time of sicknesse, or other Crosses.
4. The Time of Death.
5. The Time and day of Iudgement.
2. That a good Conscience is,
1. A feast for { 1. Contentment and satisfaction. 2. Ioy and Mirth. 3. Societie.
2. Better than a feast for { 1. The Continuance. 2. Independency. 3. Vniversalitie.
3. Without a good Conscience, all our best duties are nought.
4. It is the Ship and Arke of Faith.
5. The misery of an evill one { 1. in this world in respect of { 1. Feare. 2. Perplexitie. 3. Torment. 2. in the world to come.

The second Maine Head. Ananias his insolent injunction
Whereout is observed,
1 What is the respect a good Conscience finds in the world.
2. The impetuous injustice of the enemies of good conscience
3. Who cõmonly be the bitterest enemies of good conscience
4. That Vsurpers are Smiters.
5 What is a sad fore-runner of a Nations Ruine.

The third maine head. Pauls Answere and Contestation
Whereout is observed.
1. That Christian patience muzzels not a good Conscience from pleading its owne Innocencie.
2. The severitie of Gods Iudgements upon the Enemies and Smiters of good Conscience.
3. The equity of Gods administration in his execution of Iustice.

GOOD

GOOD CONSCIENCE.

ACTS 23.

1. *And* Paul *earnestly beholding the Councell, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good Conscience untill this day.*
2. *And the high Priest* Ananias *commanded them that stood by, to smite him on the mouth.*
3. *Then said* Paul *unto him, God shall smite thee thou whited wall.*

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CHAP. I.

The Introduction of the Discourse following.

THere is no complaint so generall as this, that the world is naught. His experience is short and slender, which will not justifie the truth of this complaint. And what think we, may the Cause be of the generall wickednes of our Times? Surely nothing makes *Ill Times*, but Ill men, and nothing makes *Ill men*, but *Ill consciences*. Ill Conscience is the source, and fountaine from whence comes all iniquities, which makes times here so ill. How well should

Hominibus sunt istæ non Temporum. *Senec. ep. 98.*

ſhould hee deſerve that could amend ill times? There is a courſe if it would be taken, that would do the deed, and ſo ceaſe the common complaint. *Eliſha's* courſe in healing the waters of *Iericho* muſt be taken. They ſaid of their waters, as wee of our times, *The water is naught, and the ground barren*, 2 King. 2. 19. What courſe now takes *Eliſha* for healing of the waters? *He went out unto the ſpring of the waters, and caſt the Salt in there*, ver. 21. *So the waters were healed*, ver. 22. The ſpring and fountaine of all actions good or evill is the Conſcience, and all actions & courſes of men are as their Conſciences. Out of the heart *are the iſſues of life*, Prov. 4. 23. the heart and Conſcience is the fountaine, every action of a mans life is an *Iſſue*, a little rivelet, and a water paſſage thence. Are theſe *waters* then that *iſſue* thence *Naught?* The way to heale them is to *caſt the Salt into the ſpring*. Mend the Conſcience and all is mended. *Good Conſciences* would make *Good men*, and *Good men* would make *Good Times*. Lo here a project for the reformation of evil times.

Nõ erit fructus bonus niſi arboris bonæ. Mutacor, & mutabitur opus, *Aug. de ver. Dom. Serm.* 12.

Were this Project ſet on foot, and a good Conſcience ſet up, how ſhould we ſee prophanation of Gods holy Name, and

and Day, Injuſtice, Bribery, Oppreſſion, Deceit, Adulteries, and Whoredomes, and all other Iniquities, how ſhould wee ſee all theſe as our Savior ſaw Satan, *falling downe like lightning from heaven?* How ſhould we ſee them come tumbling downe like ſo many *Dagons* before Gods Arke, yea tumbled downe, and broken to the ſtumps? The onely Arke that muſt daſh, and ding downe theſe *Dagons*, is a good Conſcience.

And if we would well weigh the matter, what is there equally deſirable with a good Conſcience? What is that men would have, but they deſire to have it *Good?* And yet amongſt all other things they deſire to have *Good*, what little care to have the Conſcience ſuch? Wife, children, ſervants, houſes, lands, ayre, food, raiment, who would not have theſe *good?* And yet that without which none of all theſe are good, nor will yield us any true good, that alone is neglected; and whilſt men would have all other things *good*, yet their cõſciences & themſelves are *naught*. Now alas, what good wil all other goods do us whilſt this one, and this maine *Good* thing is wanting! How excellent is this *Good* above all other good things. A *good* wife,

Ecce quid prodeſt plena bonis arca cum ſit inanis Conſcientia? Bona vis habere, & bonus non vis eſſe, tum quid eſt, quod vis habere malũ? Nihil omnino, non uxorem, nõ filium, non ancillã, villam, tunicã, poſtremo nõ caligam, & tamẽ vis habere malam vitam. Rogate, præponẽ vitam tuam, calige tuæ (ſic Conſcientiam.) *Aug. ibid.*

wife, *good* children, *good* land, &c. theſe may a man have, and yet he himſelfe not *Good*; theſe find men ſometimes *Good*, but make none ſo; theſe goods may a man have, and yet himſelfe be naught. Not ſo with good Conſcience, which no evill man can have, which whoſoever hath, it makes him and all he hath *Good*. So great and ſo good a *Good*, why is it ſo much neglected?

Vbi ſupra. Ipſæ ergo diviti æ bonæ ſunt, ſed iſta omnia bona a bonis & malis haberi poſſunt. Et cum bona ſint bones tamen facere non poſſunt. *Aug. de verb. Do. Serm. 5.*

Try we therefore and let us aſſay if by any meanes, Gods good bleſſing giving aſſiſtance, we may be able to ſtir up men, and to worke them to regard ſo great and excellent a good. It may be at leaſt ſome few may be perſwaded, and may ſet upon this work of getting a good Conſcience. If but ſome few, if but one be wrought upon, the labour is not in vaine. If none, yet our worke is with our God, to whom *we are a ſweet ſauor in Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, & in them that periſh*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15

This portion of Scripture then which I have choſen for the ground of the following Diſcourſe conſiſts of three parts.

1. *Pauls* ſober and ingenious *Profeſſion*, and *Proteſtation*, ver. 1.
2. *Ananias* his inſolent, and impetuous *Injunction*, ver. 2.

3. *Pauls*

3. *Pauls* zealous *Anſwer* and *Conteſtation*, ver. 3.

1. The firſt is *Pauls Proteſtation* in theſe words, *Men and brethren I have lived in all good Conſcience untill this day.* With this Proteſtation of a good Conſcience *Paul* begins his Plea. And however to diſtinguiſh our ſelves frō Papiſts, we beare the name of *Proteſtants*, yet we ſhal never be found and good Proteſtants indeed till we can take up *Pauls Proteſtation*, that our care, indeavor, and courſe is to live in *All good Conſcience*. A Proteſtant with a looſe and a naughty Conſcience hath no great cauſe to glory in his deſertion of the Romiſh Religion. As good a blind *Papiſt*, as a *halting Proteſtant*. The *blind* and the *halt* were equally abominable unto the Lord.

Paul was here brought forth to anſwer for himſelfe before the chiefe Prieſts and the Councell: And his Preface, as I ſaid, to his intended Apology, if hee had not been injuriouſly interrupted, is a *Proteſtation* of the goodnes of his conſcience, and this his good Conſcience, or the goodnes of his Conſcience he ſets forth;

1. From his *Converſation* πεπολίτευμαι, I have lived or converſed. A good converſation is a good evidence of a good Con-

ſcience indeed, there can be no good conſcience, where there is not a Converſing in good. It is not ſome moods and fits in ſome good actions & duties, from whence conſcience gaines the reputation of goodneſſe; but a good converſation, godly and religious in the generall tenour thereof, proves the cõſcience worthy ſuch an honor, as to be holden good. He may be ſaid to *have a* good cõſcience that can be ſaid to *live* in a good conſcience. Many a man is frequent in the *City*, & yet cãnot be ſaid to live there. There a man lives where he hath his Converſe & Reſidence. A mans life is not to be meaſured by ſome few actions, in which at ſometime he may be found, but by his general courſe and converſation. God will judge every man not according to his *ſteps*, but according to his *wayes*. It were over-rigid cenſoriouſneſſe to condemn a righteous man, and to queſtion whether his Conſcience were good, becauſe ſome ſteps of his have bin beſide the way. We know for the generall, his way is good wherein he walkes, and therefore according to his good way we judge his Conſcience good. Contrarily when we ſee a mans way for the generall to be evill, though ſometime hee may

may tread a right ſtep or two, and chance to chop into the faire road for a rod or two, for this to judge a mans Conſcience good, were a bottomleſſe and a boundleſſe Charitie: Every mans Conſcience is as his life is.

2. From the *Generalitie* of his care and obedience, *In all good Conſcience.* It muſt be *All good,* or it is *no good* Conſcience at all. There be that live in *ſome* good Conſcience; yea *Herod* ſeemes to have *much* good Conſcience, hee did many things gladly, but yet *Paul* goes further, and lives not in *ſome,* not in *much,* but in *All* good Conſcience.

3. From the *Sincerity* and *Integrity of it before God.* Before men how many have their conſciences exceeding good, & yet their conſciences are farre ſhort of goodnes, becauſe they are not good *before God,* the judge of Conſcience. Whilſt Conſcience is made onely of the Capitals of the ſecond Table, or of the externals and ceremonials of the firſt, which duty is not done out of obedience to God and his Commandements; but a mans ſelfe either in his gaine, or in his praiſe is ſought, and baſe ends are the firſt movers to good duties, here the Conſcience, what ever

applauſe it hath from, or before men for it goodneſſe; yet, of God ſhall not be ſo eſteemed. For that is not a good cõſcience which is one outwardly, but which is one inwardly, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God. And that hath its praiſe of God which is before God.

4. From his *continuance and conſtancie untill this day*. To begin a good life and courſe, and to live in all good conſcience, & that before God, are excellent things; but yet one thing is wanting to make up this goodneſſe compleat. To be ſo for a day, or ſome dayes will not ſerve, but when a man can ſay at his laſt day, I have lived in all good Conſcience *untill this day*, that man may be ſafely judged to have a good Conſcience indeed. Thus in theſe foure particulars doth the goodne of *Pauls* Conſcience appeare. It is not my purpoſe to confine my ſelfe, and to kee mee within thoſe bounds alone: but t take a larger latitude, within the compaſſ whereof I will bring both thoſe forena med, and all other materiall points whic this *Proteſtation* doth afford.

CHAP. I

Chap. II.

Conſcience deſcribed.

THe maine ſubject of this Proteſtation, and the ayme of this following diſcourſe being concerning a *good Conſcience*, for the more orderly handling thereof, conſider theſe ſpecialls.

1 What *Conſcience* is.

2. What a *good Conſcience* is.

3. How a good conſcience *may be gotten and kept*. The meanes of it.

4. How a good Conſcience *may be knowne*. The marks of it.

5. The *Motives* to get and keepe a good Conſcience.

1. *What Conſcience is:* It may be thus deſcribed: Conſcience *is a power and faculty of the ſoule taking knowledge, and bearing witneſſe of all a mans thoughts, words and actions, and accordingly excuſing or accuſing, abſolving or condemning, comforting or tormenting the ſame.* I know there be other definitions given by others more ſuccinct, and neat, but I rather chuſe this, though it may be not altogether ſo formall to the rules of Art. The rules of love and profit many times may

make bold to diſpence with rules of Art. So I may be profitable, I care the leſſe to be artificiall. It may ſuffice that this deſcription is anſwerable to that Auditory for whoſe ſake it was firſt intended. A plaine familiar deſcription agrees well enough with ſuch a people. For the better conceiving of it, let it be taken in pieces, and every parcell viewed ſeverally.

It is a faculty or power of the ſoule. It is therefore called the *Heart*, 1 *Ioh.* 3.20. *If our heart condemne us*, *Eccl.* 7.22. *Thine own heart knows that thou thy ſelfe likewiſe haſt curſed others*, that is, thine own Conſcience knowes. It is alſo called the *ſpirit of man*, 1 *Cor.* 2.11. *For what man knowes the things of a man, ſave the* ſpirit of man *which is in him.* And *Rom.* 8.16. *The ſpirit it ſelfe beares witneſſe with our ſpirit*, that is, with our Conſcience. Not that Conſcience is a ſpirit diſtinct from the ſubject of the ſoule, as *Origen* miſtooke, but becauſe it is a faculty of the ſoule, therefore the name that is oft given to the ſoule, is given to it. If it be asked in what part of the ſoule this facultie is placed, we muſt know that Conſcience is not confined to any one part of the ſoule: It is not in the underſtanding alone, not in the memory

will, or affections alone, but it hath place in all the parts of the ſoule, and according to the ſeverall parts thereof hath ſeverall Offices or acts.

Taking Knowledge: *Eccl.*7.22. Thine owne heart *knowes*. Conſcience is placed in the ſoule, as Gods ſpy, and mans ſuperiour and overſeer, and inſeparable companion that is with a man at all times, and in all places, ſo that there is not a thought, word, or worke that it knowes not, and takes not notice of. So that that which *David* ſpeakes of God himſelfe, *Pſa.*139. 3,4. *Thou compaſſest my heart, and my lying downe, and art acquainted with all my wayes, for there is not a word in my tongue, but loe thou knoweſt it altogether. Whither ſhall I goe from thy ſpirit? If I aſcend up to heaven, &c.* The ſame may be alſo ſaid of conſcience, Gods deputy; it is acquainted wth al our waies, not a motion in the mind, nor a ſyllable in the mouth, to which it is not privy: yea it is thus inſeparably preſent with us not only to ſee, but alſo to ſet downe, to regiſter, and to put downe upon Record all our thoughts, words, and works. Conſcience is Gods Notary, and there is nothing paſſes us in our whole life good or ill, which Conſcience notes

not downe with an indeleble character, which nothing can raze out but Chriſts bloud. Conſcience doth in this kind, as *Iob* wiſhes in another, *Iob* 19. 23, 24. *Oh that my words were now written, Oh that they were printed in a booke, That they were graven with an iron pen, & laid in the rock for ever.* Conſcience prints, and wri es ſo ſurely, ſo indelebly, yea it writes mens ſins as *Iudah* his ſin was, *with a pen of iron, with the point of a Diamond, and they are graven upon the Table of their hearts, Ier.* 17. 1. Conſcience doth in our pilgrimage as travellers in their journey, it keepes a Diary, or a journall of every thing that paſſes in our whole courſe, it keepes a booke in which it hath a mans whole life pend. In regard of this office conſcience is placed in the memory, and is the Regiſter and Recorder of the ſoule.

Nam quocũque me verto vitia mea me ſequuntur, ubicunque vado conſcientia mea me non deſerit, ie præſens adſiſtit, & quicquid facio ſcribit. Idcirco quãquam humana ſubterfugiam judicia judiciũ propriæ conſcientiæ non valeo. Et ſi hominibus celo quod egi, mihi tamen (qui novi malũ quod geſſi) celare nequeo. *Bern. de inter. Com. cap.* 31.

And bearing witneſſe. This we find. *Rom.* 2. 15. Their conſcience alſo *bearing witneſſe. Rom.* 9. 1. My conſcience alſo *bearing me witnes. 2. Cor.* 1. 12. *This teſtimony* of our conſcience. And this the end of the former office of the conſcience. For therefore it is exact and punctuall in ſetting downe the particulars of a mans whole life, that it may bee a faithfull wit-

neſſe

neſſe either for him, or againſt him. *For a faithfull witneſſe cannot lie. Prou.*14.5. This office it is ready to doe, at all times of triall, affliction, and moſt of all at the laſt day, the day of iudgement, when it ſhall be more ſolemnly called in to give in evidence. *Rom.*2.15.16. *Their conſcience bearing witnes, &c. In the day when God ſhall iudge ſecrets of men.* At that day it ſhall eſpecially witnes either for or againſt a man, if our life and actions have beene good, it will then doe like the true witneſſe, *Pro.*14 25. *A true witnes delivers ſoules.* If wicked & ungodly, it will deale with it as *Iob* complaines God did with him. *Iob* 10.17. *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſe againſt me.* It will teſtifie according to every mans deeds. And this teſtimonie of conſcience is without all exception, for in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word ſhall ſtand, and conſcience (as our common ſaying is) is a thouſand witneſſes: for it is an eye-witneſſe of all our actions, yea a pen-witnes, bringing teſtimonie from the authentique Records and Regiſter of the Court of Conſcience. Concerning this teſtifying office of Conſcience that place is worth the noting, *Eſa.*59.12. *For our tranſgreſſions are multiplyed*

Peccata mea celare non poſſum, quoniam quocũq; vado cõſcia mea mecum eſt, ſecum portans quod in ea poſui ſive bonum, ſive malum, ſervat vivo, reſtituet defuncto depoſitum quod ſervandũ accepit. *Bern. Med. de vot. cap.*14.

tiplied before thee, & our ſins teſtifie againſt vs, for our tranſgreſsions are with vs, and as for our iniquities we know them. By which place wee may know the meaning of the word Conſcience. Conſcience is a *knowledge together*. How together? Firſt, a knowledge together with another perſon, namely with God when God and a mans heart know a thing, there is Conſcience, knowledge together *Rom. 9. 1.* My conſcience (συμμαρτυρέσης) Co-witneſſing, witneſſing together. How together? God knows it and witneſſes, and my conſcience together with him knowes & witneſſes. Secondly a knowledge ioyned together with another knowledge; for there is a double act of the vnderſtanding, Firſt, that wherby wee thinke or know a thing. Secondly, there is a reflecting act of the ſoule wherby we thinke what we thinke, and know what we know, and this is the action of the Conſcience; and this ioyning of this ſecõd knowledge to the firſt, giues it the name of Conſcience: As here in this place, As for our iniquities wee know them, that is, we know that wee have had evill thoughts, and our knowledge tels vs, & witneſſes to vs, that we have done ſo. This agrees with *Bernards* definition,

definition, that *Conſcientia eſt cordis ſcientia*; Conſcience is the knowledge of the heart, namely paſſively. It is the knowing of what the heart knowes: which others in better termes have expreſſed thus, Conſcience is the recoiling of the ſoule vpon it ſelf; Suitable to that of the Apoſtle 1. *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know nothing by my ſelfe.* As if he had ſaid, I know not any thing that I know againſt my ſelfe, my Conſcience doth not witneſſe againſt mee. And this ſecond office of Conſcience in bearing witneſſe is alſo in the memory.

And accordingly accuſing or excuſing, abſolving or condemning] Theſe acts of Conſcience we finde *Rom.* 2. 15. *Their thoughts accuſing or excuſing one another.* *Rom.* 12. 22. Happy is he that *condemneth* not himſelf in that he allows. The ground of theſe acts is this; Conſcience, before actions are to be done, determines of their lawfulneſſe, and unlawfulneſſe; iudges of them whether they be good or evill. And if it iudge them good, it inuites, ſtirres vp, vrges, and bindes to the doing of them. *Rom.* 13. 5. Ye muſt be ſubiect *for conſcience ſake*; that is, becauſe Conſcience determines it to be good, & vrges & bindes thereunto. Hence that phraſe in common

common ſpeech, my conſcience vrgeth me to it, or he was vrged in conſcience to do it, and I am bound in conſcience to doe it. Certainly if it judge & determine actions to be evill & unlawfull, then it binds from them. So much that ſpeech implies, 1 *Cor.* 10. 27. Eate, asking no queſtion *for conſcience ſake.* So that conſcience hath a power to bind to, and to bind from.

Now then when a man in his particular actions doth follow the Preſcriptions, Dictates, Injunctions, Prohibitions, and Determinations of Conſcience, and hearkens to the incitements therof, then conſcience *excuſes* him, acquits and *abſolves* him. But if in his actions he go againſt any of theſe, then Conſcience *accuſes* him of offence, & *condemns* him for that offence. The *accuſation* of conſcience hath reſpect unto a mans *guilt*, the *condemnation* of it unto a mans *puniſhment*. *Accuſation* is an act of Conſcience paſſing ſentence upon a mans action, as when conſcience tels him, This was ill done, this action was ſinfull. *Condemnation* is an act of conſcience, paſſing ſentence not onely upon a mans action, but upon a mans perſon, as when it tels him, Thou deſerveſt Gods wrath for this Sin. Conſcience in accuſing ſhewes what

is

is the *quality*; in condemning what is the *deſert* of a mans actions. And theſe actions of conſcience are in the mind, and underſtanding part of the ſoule. The act of the conſcience in the memory determins *de facto*, and tels us what wee have done, or not done. The act of Conſcience in the underſtanding determines *de jure*, and tels us whether we have done well or ill, and ſo accordingly either excuſes or accuſes, acquits or condemns.

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Comforting or tormenting the ſame] theſe be the laſt acts of conſcience following the former. If Conſcience determining, preſcribing, and inciting to good, be hearkned unto, then it excuſes, acquits, & thereupon followes comfort, joy, hope, 2 *Cor.* 11.2. This is *our rejoycing*, the teſtimony of our Conſcience. Contrarily, if the dictates of Conſcience be not regarded, it accuſes and condemnes, and then torments with feare, griefe, diſpaire, and violent perturbations, in all which is that *worme*, *Mar.* 9. 44. And theſe actions of the conſcience are in the will, and in the affections. And thus according to the divers parts of the ſoule, the acts and office of conſcience are divers. In the memory it hath the office of a Notary, Regiſter, & Wit-

Sic in domo propria & a propria familia habeo accuſatores, teſtes, judices, & tortores, Accuſat me conſcientia teſtis eſt memoria, voluntas carcer, timor, tortor oblectamentum tormentum. *Bern. Med. de. vit. cap.* 13.

Witneſſe. In the underſtanding it hath the office of a Iudge, and an accuſer, of a *Felix* and a *Tertullus*. In the affections either of a Comforter, or Tormenter.

The ſumme of all may be thus knit up. Conſcience containes three things:

1. Knowledge practicall.

2. Application of that knowledge to our particular eſtates, and actions.

3. Thoſe affections which ariſe thereupon.

Now the ſpeciall worke of Conſcience conſiſts in the ſecond, in the applying our knowledge to our eſtates & actions. Now in this application it looks on things paſt, or preſent, ſimply as things, and ſo it witneſſes of them to be done, or not done, *Eccl.* 7. 22. Or elſe it looks at the good or evill of things paſt, preſent, and to come. If things paſt, or preſent, ſeeme good, it excuſes; if evill, it accuſes, & bites, *Rom.* 2. 15. If things to be done ſeeme good, it excites, urges, and bindes to the doing thereof. If evill, it urges, and binds therefrom. Now according to theſe ſeverall acts there follow in us divers affections, joy, hope, feare, griefe, and the like. The whole proceſſe of the worke of Conſcience fals within the frame a of practicall Syllo-

Super nos etiam poſuit ad cuſtodiendum ſi deliquiſſemus qui accuſarent, qui teſtificarentur, qui judicarent, qui punirent: conſc. quippe eſt accuſatrix, memoria teſtis, ratio judex, timor carnifex. *Bernhem de vill. iniq.*

Syllogiſme, as for example.

Every one that ſins in betraying innocent bloud, is worthy of Gods wrath.

But I (ſaith Iudas) *have ſinned in betraying innocent bloud, therefore I am worthy of Gods wrath.*

Here the *Major* is knowledge practicall, the rule & law by which conſcience keeps her Court. This is *Syntereſis*.

The *Minor* that is *Syneideſis*, the proper worke of Conſcience applying that knowledge, and generall rule for a mans particular eſtate, or action. Here Conſcience witneſſes concerning the fact, judges of the quality of it, and accordingly accuſes or excuſes.

The Concluſion is the ſentence of conſcience abſolving or condemning, and accordingly cheering or ſtinging, comforting or tormenting a man.

Conſcientia Syntereſis eſt qua victi voluptatibus vel furore ipſaq; interdum rationis decepti ſimilitudine nos peccare ſentimus. *Hieronym. in Eccl. ca.* 1. Syntereſis eſt promptuarium principiorũ ſeu regularum practicarum ejus officium eſt regulas legis divinæ proferre, & cõſc. ſubminiſtrare, ut illarum ope poſſit cenſorem agere de propriis actionibus. *Alſted. Theol. Caſ. cap.* 2.

Chap. III.

A good Conſcience what it is: falſe ones diſcovered.

WHat Conſcience is wee have ſeene; The ſecond thing conſiderable, is what a good Conſcience is. The

The Conſcience that is good, muſt be good with a double goodneſſe.

1. With the goodneſſe of *Integrity*.

2. With the goodnes of *Tranquillity*. *Vprightneſſe*, and Peace; theſe two are required to the conſtitution of a good Conſcience.

Firſt, it is good with the goodneſſe of *Integrity*, when it is an upright cõſcience. This is that which *Paul* cals *A pure Conſcience*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 3. which Phraſe a man would almoſt think in his conſcience that the Holy Ghoſt uſed on ſet purpoſe, to ſtop the mouth of the iniquity of the latter times, that ſhould ſeeke to diſgrace all good Conſcience with the ſarcaſme of purity. Now the conſcience is good with the goodneſſe of Integritie and Puritie three wayes.

1. When it being informed and rightly principled by the word of God, the only rule and binder of Conſcience, it doth truly and ſincerely judge and determine evill to be evill, and good to be good. As contrarily, the conſcience is ſinfully evill, when it doth not determine that to be evill which is evill, nor that to be good which is good, but call evill good, and good evill. Such as are the con-

ſcience

ſciences of Ignorant perſons, who wanting the knowledge of Gods Word, and having their conſciences blinded through ignorance, are not able to judge of good or evill, nor to diſcerne and determine which is which. So that knowledge is neceſſarily required to the goodnes of conſcience. *Rom.* 15. 14. *Yee alſo are full of goodnes, filled with all knowledge.* The conſcience cannot be good where the ſoule is naught, and *that the ſoule be without knowledge, it is not good,* Prov. 9. 2.

2. When it doth excuſe for that which is good, and accuſe for that which is evill, being ſanctified by the ſpirit of grace: for the accuſation of conſcience, though it follow upon ſin, yet it is not ſinfull and evill in it ſelfe, but only painfull and troubleſome, and ſo oppoſed to the goodnes of peace, not to the goodneſſe of uprightneſſe, according to that trite diſtinction of *Bernard* of a good Conſcience, and not quiet, & a quiet conſcience, & not good. It is the property of a conſcience uprightly good to accuſe upon any ſin committed. As contrarily the conſcience is ſinfully evill, when it doth not excuſe for good, nor accuſe for evill. The ſuperſtitious perſon, omitting his fopperies,

ſhould be excuſed by his Conſcience, wheras he rather receives blame from his Conſcience, therefore his Conſcience is ſinfully evill. The ſecure perſons conſcience is naught, becauſe he having cõmitted ſin, his Conſcience is ſilent, and lets him alone, and brings in no accuſation againſt him, therefore it is ſinfully evill. It is a *witneſſe* that hath *ſeene*, and *knowne* evill, and doth not *utter it*, therfore it *ſhall beare its iniquity*, Levit. 5. 1.

3. When it doth incite and urge us to doe good, and doth ſtay and hinder from evill. It is uprightly good when it ſpurs to good, and bridles from evill, *Heb.* 13. 18. *For we are aſſured that we have a good Conſcience:* viz. A conſcience that is neither ſilent to perſwade to that which is good, or diſſwade from that which is evil. If a man go about or be ready to yield to any thing that is ſinful, how wil it muſter up legions of Arguments? how will it wraſtle and ſtruggle with a man? It will ſay as *Abner* to *Ioab*, 2 *Sam.* 2. 26. *knowſt thou not that it wil be bitternes in the later end?* or as *Abigail* to *David*, 1 Sam. 25. 31. *It ſhall be no griefe, nor offence of heart unto thee* another time, not to have done this evill. If a man be negligent, or careleſſe,

careleſſe and drowſie in good duties, it comes to him with that voice, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*; or with that, *Iſa.* 30. 21. *This is the way, walke in it.* When it doth thus, it is uprightly good. Contrarily, it is ſinfully evill, when it doth not incite us to that which is good, nor hinder us from doing evill. This is a dead, and a ſeared conſcience, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. *Having their conſciences ſeared with an hot yron.*

2. It is good with the goodneſſe of *Tranquility.* And that is when the conſcience is at peace, and doth not accuſe us, becauſe it hath not wherewith to accuſe us, either becauſe not guilty of ſuch or ſuch a particular fact, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know nothing by my ſelfe*; or elſe becauſe it is aſſured of pardon in the bloud of Chriſt, by which we come to have no *more Conſcience of Sins*, Heb. 10. 2. That is, no more Conſcience to accuſe or condemne for Sin, it being done away in the blood of Chriſt: and this is the *purged Conſcience*, Heb. 9. 14. which brings Hope, Ioy, Comfort, and confidence with it, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoycing, the teſtimony of our Conſcience.* Then is the Conſcience good, when it is peaceable. As contrari-

ly, then it is evill, painfully evill, when it is turbulent, and troubleſome in the accuſations thereof, and binds over to judgement, and ſo leaves us in ſhame, feare, perplexity, and griefe, 1 *Ioh.* 3.20. *If our heart condemne us.* This is a wounded, a troubled conſcience. This is oft the evill conſcience of evill men, *Iſa.* 57.21. *There is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God.* Yet may a man have his Conſcience uprightly good, which is painfully evill; for a good mans Conſcience may be unquiet and troubled. Thus then wee ſee what a good conſcience is, that which is uprightly honeſt, and quietly peaceable. This being ſo, it ſerves to diſcover the dangerous errour of divers ſorts of people, that are in a dreame of having good conſciences, and yet having nothing leſſe. There be three ſorts of conſciences, which becauſe they are in ſome ſort quiet, and ſting not, their owners would have to goe for good ones, and yet are ſtarke naught, and they are, the *Ignorant*, the *Secure*, and the *Seared* Conſcience.

1. The *Ignorant* Conſcience, Men judge of their ignorant conſciences, as they do of their blind, dumbe, and ignorant

rant Miniſters: Such neither doe nor can Preach, can neither tell men of their ſins, nor of their duties. Aske ſuch a blinde guides people, what their cõceit is of him, & what a kind of man their Miniſter is, & ye ſhall have him magnified for a paſſing honeſt harmleſſe man, and a man wondrous quiet amongſt his neighbors. They may doe what they will for him, hee is none of thoſe troubleſome fellowes that will be reproving their faults, or complaining of their diſorders in the Pulpit; oh, ſuch a one is a quiet good man indeed. Thus judge many of their Conſciences. If their Conſciences be quiet, and lie not grating upon them, and telling them that their courſes are ſinfull, & damnable, and that their perſons are in a dangerous condition; but rather by their ſilence, ignorance, and vaine pretences doe juſtifie them, and tell them all will be well enough. Oh then what excellent good Conſciences have theſe men! They make no Conſcience of Family duties, once in the yeare to come to the Sacrament ſerves the turne; they are common ſwearers in their ordinary communication, make no conſcience of ſanctifying Sabbaths, &c. and their conſciences let them

alone in all theſe, doe not give them one ſyllable of ill language, oh what gentle, & good natured Conſciences think theſe men they have? But alas, what *evill* conſciences have they? A good Conſcience muſt be *upright* as well as *peaceable*. And an upright Conſcience is enlightned with the knowledge of the Word, and by that light judges what is good, & what evil, & when it finds mens actions not to be good and warrantable, deales plainly, and lets them heare of it. A good Conſcience hath good eyes, and is able to diſcerne betweene good and evill. Now theſe mens Conſciences are quiet, and have their mouths ſhut, but whence is it? Becauſe their eyes are ſhut, and they are dumbe, becauſe they are blind. Right Idoll Conſciences, they want mouths to ſpeake, becauſe they want eyes to ſee. So that it may be ſaid of ſuch Conſciences as the Prophet ſpeaks of thoſe Watchmen, *Iſa.* 56. 10. *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumbe dogs, they cannot barke.* Their blindneſſe bred dumbneſſe, and their ignorance ſilence. Thus it is with ignorant Conſcience. What is the reaſon they barke not, but are dumbe, and are thus quiet? Meerly becauſe

becauſe they are blind and ignorant.

But yet as good as men account theſe conſciences now, the time will come that it ſhall fare with them as it did with *Adam* and *Eve* after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, *Then their eyes were opened.* So the time will come when theſe Conſciences ſhall have their eyes opened, and then alſo ſhall their mouths be opened, yea wide, and loud opened, and theſe now quiet conſciences ſhall both bark and bite too. Doe not therefore flatter thy ſelfe in thine ignorance, as if thy condition and Conſcience were good, becauſe quiet. Never account that true Peace which is not joyned with uprightneſſe. Integrity and ignorance can no more ſtand together than light and darkneſſe. Integrity of Conſcience may be without Peace. Peace can never be without Integrity. Dumbe Miniſters go in the world for good Miniſters, becauſe quiet ones, but the day will come that men ſhall curſe them for having been ſo quiet. So ignorant and tongue-tyed conſciences go for good ones, but the time will come that men will curſe this peace of their Conſcience, for bringing them ſo quietly to hell. The Maſſe goes for an excellent

good Service, becauſe *Miſſa non mordet*, honeſt toothleſſe devotion, it never faſtens fang in the hearers fleſh. So many have Maſſe-like Conſciences, toothleſſe, and tongueleſſe Conſciences, but yet the time will come, that as Maſſe-mongers ſhall curſe their toothleſſe Maſſe, ſo ignorant perſons that now glory in their peace, ſhall curſe their toothleſſe Conſcience, yea they ſhall gnaſh their teeth, becauſe Conſcience had no teeth, and ſhall gnaw their tongues for anguiſh of heart, becauſe their conſciences wanted tongues to tel them of the danger of their wicked wayes, that have brought them to ſo miſerable a condition.

2. The *Secure* Conſcience. As the blind Conſcience was like the dumbe Miniſter, ſo the ſecure Conſcience is like the flattering Miniſter, that (*Ier. 6. 13.*) heales the hurt of his people with *ſweet words, and cries, peace, peace, where there is no peace*. This Conſcience wants not an eye, but only a good tongue in the head. It ſees its maſter to doe evill, and knowes it to be evil, but either cares not to ſpeak, or elſe is eaſily put off from ſpeaking; ſometime it cares not to ſpeake, being ſleepy, heavie, and drowſie, like thoſe Prophets,

Prophets, *Iſa.* 56. 10. *They are all dumbe dogs, they cannot barke.* What is the Reaſon? *Sleeping, lying downe, loving to ſlumber.* A ſleepy, and heavy-eyed Curre, though he ſee one come into his maſters yard, or houſe, that ſhould not, yet barkes not, as loath by his barking to diſquiet himſelfe. A ſleepy ſecure conſcience ſees many a Sin to enter the ſoule that ſhould not, and yet lies ſtill and ſayes nothing, is loath to breake his ſleepe. And yet ſuch Conſciences men count good.

Sometimes it may be it offers to ſpeak, as a ſleepy dog may open once, or twice at a ſtrangers entrance, yet is ſoone ſnibd, the leaſt word of the maſter of the houſe makes him whiſt, and quiet. So ſecure Conſciences upon the greene wound begin to ſmart, and upon the freſh commiſſion of Sin begin to mutter, and to have ſome grudgings, but their maſter anſwers them as the friend in his bed did his neighbor deſiring to borrow three loavs, *Luk.* 11. 17. *Trouble me not, for I am in bed.* I pray thee be quiet, let us have no wrangling and brawling, it ſhal be ſo no more, I will cry God mercy, I will hereafter find a time for repentance, &c. and ſo Conſcience being ſecure is eaſily put off with

with a few good words, and ſo cloſing her eyes and mouth againe, gives her maſter liberty to take his reſt. And thus the ſecure Conſcience, becauſe it is ſo eaſily huſht, and ſtilled, is counted a good Conſcience, as Nurſes counted them good children which though they are ready to cry at every turne, yet are eaſily quieted with ſome toy.

But this Conſcience is as far from a good Conſcience, as Securitie is from Integrity. Sin indeed ſleeps, but yet it ſleeps but dogs ſleepe, yea though it ſleepe ſoundly, yet it cannot ſleepe long. *Gen.* 4. 7. *Sin lies at the doore.* Sin lies aſleepe in the Conſcience as a Maſtife lies at the doore. A place where a dog cannot ſleep long. The doore is the common paſſage into and out of the houſe, every one is paſſing to and fro that way, and keep ſuch a clattering with the opening and ſhutting of the doore, that there can be no ſound, or at leaſt, no long ſleepe. No better is the ſleepe of ſecure Conſciences, which at length like mad band-dogs and fell maſtifes, will fly in the face of the ſinner, ready to pluck out the very throat and heart of him.

The ſecure conſcience can be no good

Conſcience,

Conſcience, becauſe it hath neither *uprightneſſe* nor *peace*, both which were before required to the temper of a good one. *Vprightneſſe* hath it none, for it is not faithfull in its office, it doth not witneſſe, it doth not accuſe, as it becomes an honeſt upright conſcience to doe. *Peace* it hath none. There is a great difference between a peace, and a truce: in peace there is a totall depoſition, both of Armes and Enmitie, all hoſtile affections are put off: In a truce, there is but a ſuſpention, and a ceſſation of Armes for a ſeaſon, ſo as during the ſame there is ſtill proviſion of more Force, and a preparation of greater ſtrength. A truce is but a breathing time to fit for fiercer impreſſions. The truce being ended, the aſſaults are rather fiercer than they were before. The ſecure Conſciences are quiet, not becauſe there is peace, for *there is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God, Iſa.* 57.21. But becauſe there is ſome truce, the world ſmiles upon them and they have outward hearts eaſe, and this brings them aſleepe, but if any affliction, croſſe, or ſickneſſe come, then they ſee how far they are from peace. Conſcience is ſometime at truce with ſecure ſinners, but during this truce, Conſcience

Quomodo tranquilla? cum mundi hujus proſperitas alludit, & illudit, cum laudatur peccator in deſideriis animæ ſuæ. *Bern. de Conſc.*

ſcience is preparing Armes, and Ammunition againſt them, is levying of freſh forces againſt them, and aſſoone as the truce is ended, be it ſooner or be it later, have at them with more violence, fury, & fiercenes than ever before. And the truce once ended, it will eaſilie appeare what a wide breadth of difference there is between a ſecure and a good Conſcience.

3. A *Seared* Conſcience. That which *Paul* ſpeakes of, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. *A cauterized Conſcience.* That is, as *Beza* tranſlates and expounds it. A Conſcience cut off, as it were with a Chirugions Inſtrument. An arme, or a leg cut off from the body, ſtab it, gaſh it, chop it into gobbets, do what you will with it, it is inſenſible, it feeles it not. Or elſe as our tranſlation hath it, *Having their Conſciences ſeared with an hot iron.* A compariſon borrowed from Chirurgerie. When a limbe is cut off, Chirugions uſe to ſeare that part of the Body from whence the other is taken, with an hot iron, and ſometimes they do cures by ſearing the affected parts with hot irons. Now theſe parts upon their ſearing have a kind of cruſty brawnineſſe, which is utterly inſenſible, which though it be cut, or pricked, it neither bleeds, nor feeles

feeles. Thus is it with many mens Conſciences, commit they whatſoever ſins they will, yet their hearts are ſo hardned through long cuſtome in ſin, that they feele no gripings, pinches, or bitings at all, but are growne to that dead, and dedolent diſpoſition, *Epheſ.* 4. 19. *Who being paſt feeling, &c.* It is with ſuch mens conſciences, as with labouring mens hands, which through much labor have a brawny hardneſſe growing upon them which is without any feeling. One may thruſt pins into it, pare it with a knife, and yet without any trouble or griefe at all. Such callous Conſciences have many, that though they be wounded, and gaſhed with never ſuch foule ſins, yet their conſciences ſhrink not, feele not a whit. Their Conſciences are like Gally-ſlaves backs, ſo bebrawned over with often laſhing, that an ordinary laſh will not make them ſo much as once ſhuck in their ſhoulders. You have many that can ſweare, not onely your more civill oathes, of faith and troth, but thoſe ruffianly and bloudy oathes, of bloud and wounds, and it never wounds their hearts a whit. You have many that can commit foule ſins with leſſe touch than others can heare of them.

them. You ſhall have black Smiths that are uſed to the frequent and daily handling of hot iron, hold an hot firecoale in their hands, and laugh, whilſt another would roare out. There be thoſe that can be drunke day after day, that conſecrate whole Sabbaths to *Venus* & *Bacchus*, and give themſelvs up to foule villanies, & yet not one twitch at the heart, not a ſmib, not a croſſe word from their Conſciences. Eſtrich-like they can concoct iron and put it off as eaſily as another weake ſtomacke can doe gelly. They have brought their hearts to that paſſe the drunkards body is in, *Pro.*25.35. *They have ſtricken me, and I was not ſick; they have eaten me, and I felt it not.* Their ſeared Conſciences have no more feeling than our ſotted Drunkards have in their drunkenneſſe, who though they have many a knocke, and ſore bruiſe, yet feele it not. To this feareſull condition, and ſenſeleſſe and ſeared ſtupiditie of Conſcience many growe, and when they have thus cruſted and brawned the ſame, then they have their Conſciences at a good paſſe, becauſe they heare them not brawling within them. Alas how farre are ſuch from goodneſſe of Conſcience? In ſome

ſenſe

ſenſe, thoſe have worſe Conſciences than the Devill himſelfe, who beleeves and trembles, whoſe Conſcience yet is not ſo ſeared, but it trembles at the thoughts of his deſerved damnation.

And howſoever theſe ſeared Conſciences are quiet, yet there will come a day that this ſeared cruſtineſſe ſhall bee ſcaled off, and thoſe Conſciences which were not ſenſible of ſinne, ſhall be moſt ſenſible of paine: though they were paſt feeling in the committing of ſinne, yet they ſhall be all feeling in ſuffering puniſhment for ſinne. God will pare off that brawnineſſe from their Conſciences, and will pare them ſo to the quicke, that they ſhall feele, and moſt ſenſibly feele, that which here they would not feele. Tremble therefore at the having of ſuch a Conſcience, in which there is neither uprightneſſe, nor peace, neither integrity, nor tranquility; but a ſenſleſſe and fearfull ſtupidity. Thus we have ſeen what a good Conſcience is.

Chap. IV.

Peace of Conſcience how gotten.

IT followes now to know how a man may get and keepe a good one, which is

is the third point which was propounded to be handled. A point well worth our inquiring after. A good Conſcience is the moſt precious thing that a Chriſtian can have: a thing of that eſteeme that where it is wanting, wee account a man without a Conſcience. So of a man that hath an ill Conſcience we uſe to ſay, he is a man of no conſcience. Not that he hath no Conſcience, the Devils themſelves have a conſcience, and happy it were for them they had none; but when a man hath not a good one, we eſteeme of him as having none at all. There is no greater good we can ſeeke after than a good conſcience. Let us enquire then how we may get, and keepe this ſo great a good.

A good Conſcience then conſiſting in *Peace* and *Integrity*, theſe two being gotten and kept, wee ſhall get and keepe a good Conſcience.

Firſt then to make the Conſcience peaceably good, theſe things are required.

1. *Faith* in Chriſt, and his blood. The conſcience cannot be at peace till it be purged from its guilt. An impure conſcience cānot but be an unquiet conſcience, and every guilty Conſcience is impure.

Guil

Guilt is the ſame to the Conſcience that the winds are to the ſeas, *Iſa.* 27.20.21. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up myre and dirt, there is no peace to the wicked.* Now that which makes the ſea ſo troubleſome and ragingly reſtleſſe, is the violence of the bluſtering winds that trouble & toſſe it to and fro. The winds are not ſo troubleſome to the ſea, as guilt is to the Conſcience. Therefore as the way to calme the Sea, is to calme the winds; ſo the way to quiet and calme the Conſcience, is to purge and take away the guilt. Guilt is in the Conſcience as *Ionas* in the Ship, out with him, and Sea and Ship are both quiet. But how then ſhall the guilt be purged out of the Conſcience? That we find, *Heb.* 9. 14. *How much more ſhall the bloud of Chriſt purge our Conſciences from dead works?* We cannot have a good conſcience till we be freed from an evill one. The way to be freed from an evill Conſcience, is to have *our hearts ſprinkled from an evill Conſcience, Heb.* 10.22. But what is that wherewith the conſcience muſt be ſprinkled to be made good with peace and quietnes? the ſame which we find, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *The ſprinkling of the bloud of Ieſus*

Chriſt, &*Heb*. 12.24. *The bloodof ſprinkling which ſpeaks better things than that of Abel.*

So then the Conſcience ſprinkled with Chriſts bloud ceaſes to be evill, becomes good and peaceable. The ſame Chriſt that calmed the rage of the Sea by ſtilling the winds, *Mar*. 4.39. *He aroſe and rebuked the wind, and ſaid unto the Sea, peace, and be ſtill, and the wind ceaſed, and there was a great calm*; the ſame Chriſt it is that ſtils the rage of the conſcience, by taking and purging away the guilt thereof, with the ſprinkling on of his bloud. His bloud *ſpeakes*, *Heb*. 12.24. And ſpeakes not only to God, but ſpeakes to the conſcience. The voyce which it ſpeakes, is *Peace and be ſtill*, the ſame voyce which to his Diſciples after his reſurrection, *Peace be with you*; and then followes a great calme, and peace makes the Conſcience good.

But heare the Conſcience will inquire how it may come to get this bloud ſprinkled upon it, to make it thus peaceably good, and what is it that applies this calming bloud of Chriſt? I anſwer therfore, That it is the grace of faith, therfore it was ſaid before, that faith in Chriſts blood makes peace in the Conſcience. Faith is the hand of the ſoule, and as the hyſſope ſprinkle, by which Chriſts bloud

is ſprinkled upon our Conſciences, *Heb.* 10.22. *Let us draw neere with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evill Conſcience.* And *being juſtified by faith we have peace towards God. Rom.* 5. 1. Hence that conjunction of faith and a good Conſcience, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. *of a good Conſcience, and of faith unfayned,* and ver. 19. *Holding faith and a good Conſcience.* For faith it is that makes a good conſcience, by making a quiet conſcience. Faith is not only a purifying grace, *Act.* 15.9. but it is alſo a pacifying grace, *Rom.* 5. 1. It not onely purges our corruption, by applying the efficacie of Chriſts bloud, but ſpecially purges our guilt by applying the merit of his bloud. So that no faith, no peace; and no peace, no good Conſcience. A defiled Conſcience can be no good Conſcience, and what defiles the Conſcience? See *Tit.* 1. 15. *Vnto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but even their mind and Conſcience is defiled.* They that be defiled have their conſciences defiled, but how come they and their Conſciences ſo? *To them that are defiled and unbelieving.* Therefore an unbelieving Conſcience is a defiled conſcience, and a defiled

conſcience is no good conſcience, becauſe it can have no peace ſo long as it is clogged with defiling guilt. But contrarily, faith purifying not onely from corruption, but from guilt, by the application of Chriſts bloud makes the conſcience pure and peaceable both.

There can be no *peace* of conſcience but where there is the righteouſneſſe of the perſon. There is no peace to the wicked, *Iſa.*57.21. as if he ſhould ſay, an evill unrighteous perſon cannot have a good conſcience: where the perſon is evill, there the conſcience cannot be good. Now faith in Chriſts bloud makes a mans perſon good, & ſo the conſcience becomes good. It makes the perſon *righteous*, and the perſon being *righteous*, the conſcience is at *peace*; for *the worke* of righteouſneſſe, is peace, *and the effect* of righteouſneſſe, quietneſſe, *and aſſurance for ever*, *Iſa.* 32. 17. with which that of the Apoſtle ſweetly ſutes, *Revel.* 7. 2. *Firſt King of* righteouſneſſe, *and after that King of* peace. Our perſons muſt firſt find Chriſt a King of *righteouſneſſe*, by juſtifying them from their guilt, before our conſciences can find him King of *Salem*, pacifying them from their unquietneſſe. Our perſons once *juſtified* by

Chriſts blood from their guilt, and unrighteouſneſſe, our conſciences are *pacified* and freed from their unquietneſſe.

Wouldſt thou then have a good conſcience? Get the peace of conſcience. Wouldſt thou have Peace in thy conſcience? Get faith in thy ſoule; Believe in the Lord Ieſus, and get thy ſoule ſprinkled with his bloud, and then *Heb.* 10. 2. Thou ſhalt have no more conſcience of Sin, thy Conſcience ſhall be at quier, no more accuſing thee, nor threatning thee condemnation for thy Sin.

2. *Repentance* from dead workes. Though Chriſts bloud be that which purges the conſcience from dead works, and ſo workes peace; yet that peace is not wrought in our apprehenſion; neither do we get the feeling of this faith without ſome further thing. Therefore to our faith muſt be joyned our repentance, though not in the making of our peace, yet for the feeling of it. Many are ready to catch at Chriſts bloud, and if that will make a good conſcience they are then ſafe enough. But as thou muſt have Chriſts bloud, ſo Chriſt will have thine heart alſo bleed by repentance, ere he wil vouchſafe the ſenſe of peace. A cõſcience

therefore that would be a conſtience having peace, muſt not onely be a *believing*, but a *repenting* conſcience, *Mat.* 3.2. *Repent ye, for the Kingdome of heaven is at hand*, the Kingdome of heaven ſhall be yours if you will repent, ye ſhall have it immediately upon your repentance. But wherein ſtands this kingdome offered to repentant conſciences? *The Kingdome of God ſtands in peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14.17. *Repent, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the holy Ghoſt*, Act. 3.38. And what may that gift be. *The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace*, Gal. 5.22. Which though it be to be underſtood of peace betweene man and man, yet alſo that peace which is betweene God and man is the fruit of the ſpirit, and *the love of God ſhed abroad into our hearts by the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 5.5. is the gift of the holy Ghoſt, which he gives to all, that by repentance ſeeke to get a good conſcience. *Bleſſed are they that mourne*, that is, which repent, *for they ſhalbe comforted*, Mat. 5.4. they ſhall have the peace of a good conſcience, which is the greateſt and ſweeteſt comfort in the world.

Many doe truſt all to their ſuppoſed faith, as a ſhort cut and compendious way to a good conſcience, but he whoſe

faith doth not as well purifie the heart as pacifie it, hath neither faith nor a good conſcience. It is idle to hope for peace by faith, whilſt thou liveſt impenitently in a ſinfull courſe. Thou canſt have no peace of conſcience ſo long as thou haſt peace with thy ſins. Peace with conſcience will be had by war with ſin, in the daily practiſe of repentance. It it is but a dreame to think of a good cõſcience in peace, whilſt a man makes no conſcience of ſin. They that have a good conſcience by Chriſts bloud, may be indeed ſaid to have no conſcience of ſin, as *Heb.* 10. 2. But yet there is a great difference betweene *having* no conſcience, and *making no* conſcience of ſin. To *have* no couſcience of ſin, is to have a peaceable good conſcience, not accuſing of ſin, being ſprinkled with Chriſts blood. To *make* no conſcience of ſin, is for a man impenitently to live, and ly in any ſin. Now let any judge whether theſe two can ſtand together, that a man may live as he liſt, and *make no conſcience* of any ſin, and yet have ſuch peace by faith as that he *hath no Conſcience* of ſin. It is an unconſcionable thing in this ſenſe to lay all upon Chriſt, an unconſcionable requeſt to have him take a-

way our guiltineſſe, and yet wee would wallow in our filthineſſe ſtill. How ſhall faith remove the ſting, when repentance removes not the Sin?

Men ſeeking peace by faith in Chriſts blood, & yet living and lying in their ſins without repentance, God will give them *Iehues* anſwer to *Iehoram*, 2 *King.* 9. 22. *What peace, ſo long as the whoredomes of thy mother Iezebel, and her witchcrafts are ſo many?* So what peace of conſcience, ſo long as thine oathes, Sabbath-breaches, whoredomes, drunkennes, &c. do remain, and remaine, unrepented of, and unreformed. It is true of all Sin, which is ſpoken of Romiſh Idolatry, *Apoc.* 14. 11. *They have no reſt day nor night*; that is, no peace of conſcience to any of that religion; ſo of all that live in any Sin, they have no true reſt day nor night; that is, as *Iſaiah* interprets it, There is no peace to the wicked. Peace and wickedneſſe live not together under one roofe. Wouldſt thou then have a peaceable heart? Get an humbled, a mourning and a repentant heart for Sin. The leſſe peace with Sin, the more peace with God and our owne Conſciences.

3. The conſtant and conſcionable exercise

erciſe of prayer. An excellent meanes to helpe us to the ſenſe of that peace which makes the conſcience good. Hee that hath a good conſcience will make conſcience of prayer. And prayer will helpe to make a good conſcience better, *Phil.* 4, 7. *In every thing by prayer and ſupplication with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made knowne unto God*, and marke what ſhall be the fruit thereof, *And the peace of God that paſſes all underſtanding, ſhall keepe your hearts and minds through Ieſus Chriſt.* See *Iob* 33. 26. *He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy.* It is many times with mens conſciences, as it was with *Saul*, hee was vexed and diſquieted with an evill ſpirit; but *Davids* Harpe gave him eaſe: Prayer is a *Davids* Harpe, the muſicke whereof ſweetly calmes, and compoſes a diſtempered and diſquieted conſcience, and puts it into frame againe. As in other diſquiets of the heart, after prayer *David* bids his ſoule *returne unto her reſt. Pſ.* 116. 4.7. So we may in theſe diſquiets of conſcience do no leſſe.

The way to get a good peaceable conſcience, is to have acquaintance with God,

God; and when wee have acquaintance with him, then ſhall we have peace, *Iob* 22. 21. *Acquaint thy ſelfe now with him, and be at peace.* Now acquaintance is gotten with God by prayer. *Zech.* 13. 9. *They ſhall call on my name, and I will heare them; I will ſay, it is my people; and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God.* Loe how in prayer acquaintance is bred betweene God and his people, and acquaintance breedes love, and peace; and peace a good Conſcience. Iudge then what pitious conſcience they muſt needs have, that make ſo little conſcience of ſeeking God in this duty; of wicked ones the *Pſalme* ſpeakes, *They call not upon God, Pſal.* 14. as much as *Iſaiah* ſayes, There is no peace to the wicked, they are utterly voyd of good Conſcience.

Chap. V.

Integrity of Conſcience how procured.

And thus we have ſeen how the conſcience may be good for peace. It followes to conſider how it may become uprightly good, with the goodneſſe of Integrity. The goodneſſe of Integrity is gotten and kept by doing five things.

1. Walke

1. Walke and live as *Paul* in this Text, *Before God.* Set thy ſelfe ever in all thy wayes, as in the ſight and preſence of God, who is the Iudge and Lord of conſcience. Of *Moſes* it is ſaid, that he ſaw him *that was inviſible, Heb.*11.27. Therfore it is that men walke with ſuch looſe and evill conſciences, becauſe they think they walke inviſibly. And they think that God ſees not them, becauſe they ſee not God. An upright conſcience is a good conſcience, and this is the way to get an upright one, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Walke before me, and be upright.* To have God alwayes in our eye, will make us walke with upright hearts. So *Pſal.* 119.168. *I have kept thy precepts, and thy teſtimonies,* that is in effect, I have kept a good Conſcience; but how came he to doe it? *for all my wayes are before thee.* Conſcience, as we ſaw before, is a knowledge together, that is, together with God. Now then this is an excellent meanes to get and keepe a good conſcience, to be carefull to doe nothing, but that which we wou'd be content God ſhould know as well as our ſelves. Think with thy ſelfe before every evill action: Am I content that God ſhould know of this? But how then may a man bring himſelfe

ſelf to this? Set thy ſelf alwayes in Gods preſence, and ſee the inviſible God, and ſee thy ſelfe viſible in his eye, and know that thou doeſt nothing which he takes not notice of. This well thought upon, and laid to heart, would make men make much conſcience of their wayes. The contrary to this is *raſh walking*, Lev. 26. when a man walkes ſo looſely, and heedleſly, as if there were no eye upon him to view him in his actions.

Dirige greſſus ſecundũ verbum tuum. Quid eſt, Dirige ſecundum verbum tuum. Virecti ſint greſſus mei, quia rectum eſt verbum tuum. Ego, inquit, diſtortus ſum ſub pondere iniquitatis, ſed verbum tuum eſt regula veritatis, me ergo diſtortum à me corrige tanquam ad regulam, hoc eſt, ad verbum tuum. *Au. de ver. Apo. ſer.* 12.

2. Frame thy whole Courſe by the rule, and ſhape it by the directions of the word of God. Gods Word is the Rule of conſcience, *Gal.* 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this Rule.* Men muſt then walke by rule, and the Word muſt be this rule, *Pſ.* 30. 23. *To him that orders his converſation*; all Chriſtians muſt be regulars, and muſt live orderly. But what is that Rule by which their converſation muſt be ordered? That ſame, *Pſ.* 119. 133. *Order my ſteps in thy Word.* Hee that orders his courſe by that rule, which is the rule of conſcience, ſhall be ſure to keepe and get a good conſcience. Hee that will make good worke will work by his rule, whereas hee that workes by gueſſe muſt needs make but ill worke. *Whatſoever is not of faith*

faith is Sin, Rom. 14. 23. That is, whatſoever a man doth, and hath not warrant for it out of, and from the rule of the Word, makes a mans conſcience in that particular to be evill. And therefore, v. 5. *Let a man be fully perſwaded in his owne mind.* How happy ſhould men be in getting and keeping good conſciences, if they would lay their lives & actions to the Rule. The want of this is it that makes men, men of ſo ill conſciences. Some live by no Rule, ſome by falſe Rules; & hence come mens conſciences to be ſo Anomalous. Some live by no Rule, but doe whatſoever ſeemes good in their owne eyes, goe as their luſts lead them, and follow his beck that rules in the Ayre. This is alſo to *walk raſhly*, Lev. 26. He that doth things without rule, goes raſhly to worke. Hee that walkes irregularly, walkes raſhly, and no marvell if men have crooked wayes, and crooked conſciences, when they will not live by Rule. Some againe live by falſe Rules, and that not onely Popiſh fictitious Regulars that live by ſuperſtitious Rules of their *Dominick*, *Francis*, *&c.* But amongſt our ſelves many have a Rule they doe live by, but that Rule is not the Word, but ſome falſe Rules

Rules of their owne deviſing. Such as are theſe; Great mens practice, or ſome learned mans opinion, the cuſtome of times and places wherein they live, the example of the multitude, or ſome ſecret, blind and ſelf-conceived principles which they keepe to themſelves, and by which they live. All which being crooked Rules, muſt needs make crooked Conſciences, whereas if men would live by *Davids* Rule, *Pſ.* 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, and in every action would have an eye and *a reſpect unto the Commandements*, as he had, *Pſal.* 119. 6. then ſhould they *make ſtraight paths for their feet*, *Heb.* 12. 13. and keepe upright Conſciences in every ſpirituall action; therefore have an eye to the Word, queſtion it whether it be juſtifiable and warrantable by the Word or no, and meddle no further than that will authorize, and beare thee out. If this courſe were taken, ſuch a good courſe would make and keep a good Conſcience. And why ſhould not men be willing to take this courſe; why will we not make that Word our Rule, which muſt be made our Iudge? *The word which I ſpeak ſhall judge you in the laſt day*, Ioh. 12. 48. The Word ſhall judge our

Inter cauſas malorũ noſtrorum eſt, quod vivimus ad exẽpla, nec ratione cõponimur, ſed cõſuetudine. Quod ſi pauci facerent nollemus imitari, cùm plures facere cœperunt, quaſi honeſtius ſit, quia frequentius ſequimur: & recti apud nos locum tenet error, ubi publicus factus eſt. *Sen. Ep.* 124.

our conſciences, therfore let it rule, and order them. And if it have the ruling of our conſciences, it will make them good conſciences, and when they are good they need not feare what Iudge they come before, nor what judgement they undergoe. In ſumme, if we would have good conſciences, we muſt make more conſcience than is commonly made of reading, and ſearching the Scriptures. The ignorance and neglect of this duty is it which banes ſo many conſciences in the world.

3. Keep a daily and a frequent Audit with thy conſcience, often examination of the conſcience conduces much to the goodnes of it. The Prophet complains of his people, *Every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel, Ier.* 8. 6. Here were men far from a good conſcience; but what was the reaſon of it? He gives it in the former words, *No man repenteth him of his wickedneſſe, ſaying, what have I done?* There was no examination of their conſciences and courſes, what they were, nor how they were, and from hence comes this miſchiefe. This was *Davids* courſe. *Pſa.* 119.51. *I conſidered my waies and turned my feet unto thy teſti-*

Integritatis tuæ curioſus explorator vitam tuam in quotidiana diſcuſſione examina. Attende diligenter quàtum proficias, vel quantum deficias, qualis ſis in moribus, qualis ſis in affectibus, quam ſimilis ſis Deo, vel quam diſimilis, qua prope, vel quam longe &c. Redde ergo te tibi, & ſi non ſemper vel ſæpe, at ſaltem interdum. *Bern. med. de vot. cap.* 5.

teſtimonies. When a mans feet are in the wayes of Gods teſtimonies, then hee walkes with an upright conſcience, and marke how *David* came to doe ſo, *I conſidered my wayes*, he uſed to examine his Conſcience.

The firſt ſtep to get a good conſcience, is for a man to know that his conſcience before reformation is evill. How ſhall that be knowne without a ſearch? When a ſearch hath diſcovered what it is that makes the conſcience, and courſe evill, then will Conſcience be ready to labour a man to the reformation of that which is amiſſe, and will not ceaſe to urge, and ply a man till it be done. Frequent examination as it helps to the making of Scholars, ſo to the making of Conſciences good. Hence mens lying in ſo groſſe neglects of good duties, in ſo many great evils, becauſe men and their conſciences never reckon. Men take not themſelves aſide into their cloſets and chambers, and there ſet not up a privie Seſſions to make inquiry into their own hearts and wayes, and therefore are their wayes and conſciences ſo much out of order. Many a man thinks his eſtate in the world to be very good, and thinkes hee growes rich and wealthy,

wealthy, when his eſtate indeed is weak, and growes every day worſe than other. Now what is it that cauſes ſo great a miſtake? Nothing but this, that hee never lookes over his bookes nor caſts over his reckonings. If he had done this, he ſhould have ſeene that his eſtate was not anſwerable to his conceit, and the knowledge of his miſconceit would have made him have lived at a more wary, and thrifty rate, and have kept himſelfe within ſuch a compaſſe as might have kept up his eſtate, whereas now the not examining his books, puts him into a conceit of wealth, and this conceit beggers and undoes him. It fares no better with too many in their Conſciences. *Laodicea* thought well of her ſelfe, *Thou ſayeſt, I am rich.* If ſhe had examined her conſcience, ſhe ſhould have ſeene that which Chriſt ſaw, that ſhe was poore, blind, naked, and miſerable, and the ſight of this would have made her to have ſought after that counſell which Chriſt there gives her, *Revel. 3.* Men would have far better conſciences if they knew in what ill caſe their Conſciences ſtand, and examination would help them to the knowledge of this. If men would but over-looke the booke of their Con-

ſcience, and ſee how many omiſſions of good, how many ſinfull cõmiſſions ſtand regiſtred there, it would both make them marvellous ſollicitous how to get them wiped out, and wondrous wary how any more ſuch Items came there. Often reckonings would blot out, and keep off the ſcore. Here is then wiſedome for ſuch as deſire to keepe good conſciences. Doe with the workes of thy converſation as God did with the works of his Creation. He not onely ſurveyed at the ſixt dayes end the whole worke of the weeke, but at each dayes end made a particular ſurvey thereof. Doe thou ſo, not onely at the weekes end, at thy lives end, ſearch thine heart, and examine thy courſe, but at every dayes end looke backe into the day paſt, and examine what thy carriage and behaviour hath beene. This being done, a man ſhall find his workes either good or evill. If good, how ſhall his conſcience cheere him with its peace? If evil, then if conſcience have any life, or breath in it, it will make a man fall to humiliation, and to a godly reſolution of watching over his waies for the future, ſo ſhall conſcience bee much holpen for integrity. *Davids* counſell is good, *Pſ.* 4. 5. *Examine*

Omni die cum vadis cubitũ, examina diligenter quid cogitaſti, & quid dixiſti, indie, & quomodo utile tempus & ſparium quod datum eſt ad acquirendũ vitam æternam diſpenſaſti. Et ſi bene tranſiviſti, laudaDeum: ſi malè vel negligẽter, lugeas & ſequenti die non differas confiteri. Si aliquid cogitaſti, dixiſti, velfeciſti, quod tuam conſcientiam multum remordeat, non comedas antequam confitearis. *Bern. form. vit. honeſt.* Suavius dormiunt qui relinquunt curas in calceis.

mine your hearts upon your beds; and his resolution is also good, verſ. 8. of the ſame Pſalm, *I will lay me down and ſleep in peace*. Who would not be glad ſo to ſleepe, and to take his reſt ſo? would we ſleep upon *Davids* pillow, ſleep in peace? then hearken we to *Davids* counſel, to *examine* our ſelves *upon our beds*. There is nothing makes a mans bed ſo ſoft, nor his ſleep ſo ſweete as a good conſcience. It is with Sins as with Cares, both trouble a mans ſleep, both are troubleſome bed-fellows, as they therefore ſleep ſweetly that leave their cares in their ſhooes, ſo they ſleepe with moſt peace that let not ſin ly downe to ſleepe with them, who are ſo farre from lying downe in their ſinnes, that by their good will, will not let the Sun go downe upon their ſin, but by examination ferret out the ſame. This being done, it may be ſaid, as *Prov.* 3. 24. *Thou ſhalt ly downe, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet*. Nay further, examine thy conſcience upon thy bed, and thou ſhalt not onely ſleepe in peace, but thou ſhalt awake and ariſe the next morning with an upright frame of heart, diſpoſed to the more caution againſt Sinne the day following. So much *David* ſeemes to intimate in that

forenamed place. *Tremble and ſinne not.* That is, be afraid to ſin, take heed ye ſin no more. But what courſe may one take to come to that integrity of conſcience, as to feare to ſinne? Take this courſe, *Examine your hearts upon your beds.*

But alas how rare a practice is this, and therefore are good conſciences ſo rare. Many thinke this an heavy burden, and a ſore taske, and count the remedy a great deale worſe than the diſeaſe, there is nothing they tremble at more than a domeſticall Audit, and this reckning with their conſciences. They ſay of conſcience as *Ahab* of *Micaiah*, and care as little to meddle with conſcience as *Ahab* with *Micaiah*. *I hate him; for he never ſpeakes good to me*, 1 King. 22. So they thinke the conſcience will deale with them. They know their conſcience will ſpeake as *Iob* ſayes God wrote, *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.* Conſcience hath ſuch a ſtinging waſpiſh tongue, that by no meanes they dare indure a parly with it. It is with many and their conſciences, as with men that have ſhrewiſh wives. Many a man when hee is abroad, hath no joy at all to come home, nay he is very loath to come within his owne doores, he feares he ſhall have

have ſuch a peale rung him, that hee had rather be on the houſe top, as *Solomon* ſpeakes, or in ſome out houſe, and lodge as our Savior at *Bethlem* in a cratch, or a Manger, than come within the noiſe of her clamorous, and chattering tongue. So many thinke conſcience hath ſuch a terrible ſhrewiſh tongue, that if they ſhall but come within the ſound thereof, they ſhall be caſt into ſuch melancholly dumpes, as they ſhall not be able in haſte to claw off againe. How much, and how ſeriouſly are they to be pitied that to prevent a few houres, or dayes ſuppoſed ſorrow, and ſadneſſe, by which they might come to procure both peace and integrity of Conſcience, will adventure the rack and eternal torture of conſcience in Hell. Remember that there is no melancholly to the melancholly of Hell.

Chap. VI.

Two further meanes to procure integrity of Conſcience.

IN the fourth place, deale with thy conſcience as God would have *Abraham* doe by *Sarah*, *Gen.*21.12. *In all that*

Sarah ſhall ſay unto thee, hearken unto her voice. So here, if we would get and keep a good conſcience, in all that it ſhall ſay unto us, being enlightned and directed by the word, hearken unto it. Conſcience being enlightned hath a voyce, and no man but ſometime or other ſhall heare this voyce of conſcience. Conſcience is Gods Monitor to ſpeake to men when others cannot, or dare not ſpeak. Sometimes men cannot ſpeak as not being privie to other mens neceſſities and failings. Sometimes they may not be ſuffered to ſpeak, as *Ahab* will not indure *Micaiah* to ſpeake to him. Sometime if a man ſpeake, hee may have rough and angry anſwers, as the Prophet had from *Amaziah*, 2. *Chron.* 26. 16. *Art thou made of the Kings Counſell? forbeare, why ſhouldſt thou be ſmitten?* God hath therefore provided every man even great men which may not be ſpoken to, he hath provided them a boſome Chaplein, that will round them in the eare, and will talk roundly to them, one that will be of their counſell in deſpight of them; one that feares no fiſts, dreads no ſmiting, yea, one that fears not to ſmite the greateſt, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. *And Davids heart ſmote him after that he had numbred the people.* It may be many

many there were about *David* that had not the hearts to ſmite *Dauid* with a grave reproofe, though hee gives leave to the righteous to doe ſo, *Pſ.* 141. *Let the righteous ſmite mee,* but yet whilſt others, it may be, are fearfull and timorous to doe him that good office, conſcience is at no demurre upon the point, that feares not, but ſmites *David* for ſin.

Gods Miniſters are oft ſlighted, and light ſet by, preachers cānot be regarded, but God hath given men a Preacher in their own boſom, and this Preacher will make manya curtain ſermon, wil take men to task upon their pillow, & will be preaching over our Sermons againe to them. And though many will not be brought to repetition of Sermons in their Families, yet they have a Repeater in their boſom, that will be at private repetitions with them in ſpite of them, and will tell them, This is not according to that you have been taught, you have been taught otherwiſe; you have been reproved for, and convinced of this ſinne in the publicke Miniſterie, &c. Why doe not you hearken and reforme? Thus then conſcience having a voyce, and doing the office of a Preacher unto us, if wee would have

conſcience good, then in all things that conſcience enlightened ſhall ſay unto us, hearken unto it. More diſtinctly conſcience hath a two-fold voyce.

1 A voyce of direction, telling us what is good or evill, what is lawfull and unlawfull, *Iſa.* 30.21. *And thine eares ſhall heare a word behind thee, ſaying, This is the way, walke ye in it:* That is underſtood of the voyce of Gods ſpirit in the ſecret ſuggeſtions thereof, and ſuch is the voyce alſo of conſcience within us, dictating to us, and directing us what duties are to be done, what courſes to be avoyded. How many times doth conſcience preſſe us to repentance and to reforme our wayes? how often doth it call upon us to ſettle to ſuch and ſuch good courſes? and ſo with *David, Pſal.* 16.7. *Our reines doe teach it in the night ſeaſon.*

Ita enim deſuper in ſilento ſonat quidam non auribus ſed mentibus. *Auguſt. in Pſal.* 42.

2 A voyce of correction and accuſation, checking and chiding, taking up and ſnipping us when we do amiſſe. So *Pſal.* 42.5. 11. and *Pſ.* 43.5. *Why art thou caſt downe O my Soule, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* And *Pſ.* 77.10. whilſt in the foregoing verſes he was complaining, and uſing ſome ſpeeches that might ſavor of ſome diffidence, ſee how Conſcience doth

doth her office by a correcting voyce: *And I ſaid, this is my infirmitie*; as if hee had ſaid, whilſt I was uſing ſuch different expoſtulations, mine own conſcience told me, I did not do well. Cõſcience ſo ſpeaks to us, as the Lord to *Ionah*, *Ion.* 4. 4. 9. *Doſt thou well to be angry?* So ſayes conſcience oft, Doeſt thou well to be thus earthly, thus eager upon the world, thus negligent and formall in holy duties? thus conſcience gives her privie nips, and her ſecret checks. This is that of which *Iob* ſpeaks, *Iob* 27. 6. *My heart ſhall not reproch me ſo long as I live.* Implying that conſcience after ſin hath a reproching voice, as when it befooles a man, as foole that thou art to do this, to loſe thy peace with God for a baſe ſinfull pleaſure. Thus *Davids* conſcience reproched him, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. *I have don very fooliſhly*; yea, *Pſ.* 37. 22. it puts the foole and the beaſt both upon him, *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee.* This is the ſmiting of the conſcience, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. Conſcience firſt points with the finger and gives direction, if that be neglected, it ſmites with the fiſt, and gives correction.

Now then that which I ayme at, is this; If we would get and keepe a good con-

ſcience, then neglect not, nor deſpiſe conſcience when it ſpeaketh. Doth thy conſcience preſſe thee to any works of piety, to the care of family-worſhip, and privat devotion, to the reading of the Scriptures, ſanctification of the Sabbath, &c. In any caſe be ſo wiſe as to hearken to the councels, to the urgings, and to the injunctions which come out of the Court of Conſcience. Hearken in any caſe to this Preacher, whom thou canſt not ſuſpect of partiality, malice, ill will, as thou doſt others, therby giving way to ſatans policy, that hereby ſtops up the paſſages of thine heart, that the Word may not enter. Here can be no ſuch ſuſpitions; conſcience cannot be ſuſpected to be ſet on by others; though *Ieremy* be charged to be ſet on by *Baruch*, *Ier.* 43. 3. Therefore hearken to the voice of this Preacher, and this will helpe thee to a good conſcience.

Ideo quantū potes, teipſum corrige, inquire in te, accuſatoris primum partibus fungere, deinde Iudicis noviſſime deprecatoris: aliquando offundere. *Senec. epiſt.* 28.

Againe, doth thy conſcience rebuke thee, doth it chide and check thee, doth thy heart *reproach thee for thy wayes?* doth it ſay, doeſt thou well to live in ſuch and ſuch Sins? Doth it punctually reprove thee for thine evils? Doe not anſwer conſcience, as *Ionas* anſwered God, frowardly, *Yea I doe well*, but even cloſe

with

with conſcience, and doe thou accuſe thy ſelfe as faſt as it accuſes, acknowledge thy folly, yield, promiſe, and covenant with thy conſcience a preſent and ſpeedy reformation. This if it were done, how happy ſhould men be in getting and keeping a good conſcience.

But alas, how few regard the voyce of Conſcience, and once hearken to it, and the very want of this duty is it which breeds ſo much ill conſcience in the world. Men in this caſe are guilty of a double wickedneſſe. Either they deale as the Iewes with the Apoſtles, *Act.* 4. 18. and 1 *Theſ.* 2. 16. They either *ſtop conſciences mouth,* and labour to ſilence this Preacher, or elſe they deale with conſcience as the Iews did with *Stephen, Act.* 7. 57. *They ſtopped their eares.* If they cannot ſtop conſciences mouth, they will at leaſt ſtop their owne eares.

1 They labour to ſtop conſciences mouth. If conſcience begin to take them aſide, and to ſay to them, as *Ehud* to *Eglon*; *Iudg.* 3. 19. *I have a ſecret errand unto thee:* they anſwer, but in another ſenſe, as hee did; *Keepe ſilence.* If conſcience offer to be talking unto them, they ſhuffle it off as *Felix* did *Paul*, they

they are not at leaſure, they will finde ſome other time when their leaſure will better ſerve. Yea many when their conſciences reproach them, they againe reproach and reprove it, and anſwer it as the *Danites* did *Micah*, *Iudges* 11. 23. *What ayleth thee?* and are ready to give reproachfull language to their owne conſcience, that it cannot be quiet and let them alone.

2 But yet Conſcience will not oftentimes be thus poſted and ſhuffled off, will not bee gagged, or ſuffer her lips to bee ſown up, but will deale with a man as the woman of Canaan did with our Saviour, *Math.* 15. She would not be put off with neglect, or croſſe anſwers, but ſhe ſtil preſſes upon our Saviour, and grows ſo much the more importunat. So oftentimes conſcience when ſhe ſees men ſhuffle, growes the more importunate, and will dog and haunt men ſo much the more. Yea it deals like the blind men, *Math.* 20. 31. who when the multitude rebuked them, *they cryed the more.* Now then when conſcience growes thus clamorous, and will not be ſilenced, then they will ſtop their owne eares, that if it will needs be prating, it ſhall but tell a tale to a deafe man.

To

To this end men put a double tricke upon their conſciences.

1 *Sauls trick.* *Saul* is vexed with an evill ſpirit, what muſt be the cure? ſeeke him out a minſtrell. Thus many, when the cry of conſcience is up, betake them to their merriments and jollities. They try whether the noiſe of the Harps, and Viols, and the roarings of good fellowes will not drowne the voyce and noiſe of conſcience. They will try whether the dinne of an Ale-houſe, or the ratling and clattering of the Dice and Tables cannot deafe their eares againſt the clamours of conſcience. Thus doe many in the accuſations of conſcience, give themſelves wholly up to all manner of pleaſures and delights, that ſo their minds being taken up with them, there might bee no leaſure to give conſcience any the leaſt audience.

2 *Cains trick.* *Cain* had a mark of God upon him, *Gen.* 4. 15. And what might that marke be? *Chryſoſtome* thinks it was a continuall ſhaking and trembling of his body. If that were his marke, why might not that trembling come from the horrour of his guilty conſcience, following him with a continuall hue and cry

Chryſ. in 1. op. Cor. Hom. 7.

and cry for murther, and reproching him for a bloody murtherer. How-ever, no queſtion but his conſcience continually haunted him, and the cry of blood was ever in his eares. Now then what courſe takes he? ye ſhall ſee *Gen.*4.17. That hee falls a building of Cities, betakes himſelfe to a multitude of imployments, that the noiſe of the ſawes, axes, and mallets, might be lowder then the noiſe of his Conſcience. If Conſcience bee out of quiet with them, & will not ceaſe to urge and pinch them, then have among their ſheepe, and oxen, that their bleating, and bellowing may keepe under the voice of conſcience, they do ſo poſſeſſe their heads and their thoughts, and ſo overload them with much dealings in the world, that there is no ſpare time wherein their eare can be free to heare the voice of conſcience. The clutter of their many buſineſſes make too great a noyſe for Conſcience to have audience. They deale with their conſciences as the *Epheſians* dealt with *Alexander*, *Act.*19.33.34. *And Alexander beckned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Iew, all with one voice about the ſpace of two houres cryed out,*

Great

Great is Diana of the Epheſians. If *Alexander* had had never ſo good lungs, and ſtrong ſides hee might have ſtrained his voyce till hee had crazed the organs of language, and might have ſpoken till he had been hoarſe againe, before he could have beene heard to have ſpoken one ſyllable, though he had ſpoken all the reaſon in the world. Such a noiſe of an outragious bellowing multitude had bin almoſt enough to have drownd the voice of a Canon. Thus deale men with their conſcience, if ſhe but prepare to ſpeak and give but a becke with the hand, preſently thruſt themſelves into a crowd of buſines that may out-cry and over-cry the bawling noiſe therof. It was an hideous noiſe that the ſhricking infants of Iſrael made when they were offred up alive in fire unto *Moloch*. Now leſt their parents bowels ſhould earne with compaſſion, and be affected with the ſhrickes of their poore babes, therfore they had their drums and trumpets ſtrucke up and ſounded in the time of ſacrifice, to make ſuch a noiſe, that in no caſe the lamentable cryes of the infants ſhould be heard. The ſame trick do too many put upon their conſciences, if they will be clamouring, they will

will have ſome Drum or other, whoſe greater noiſe may deafe their eares from hearing the cries of conſcience.

But alas what poore projects are theſe: The time will come when men ſhall have neither pleaſures nor profits, neither delights nor buſineſſe, to ſtop their eares. Though now men beate upon theſe Drum-heads, and with the noiſe of their pleaſures and profits keepe conſcience voice under from being heard, yet the day will come, when God will beat out theſe Drum-heads, and then the cries and horrid and hideous ſhrickes of conſcience ſhall bee heard: God will one day ſtrip thee of all thy pleaſures and imployments, and will turne thee ſingle and looſe to thy conſcience, and it ſhall have full liberty to bait thee, and bite thee at pleaſure. Oh how much better is it to be willing to hearken to the voice of Conſcience here, than to be forced to heare it in hell, when the time of hearkning will be paſt and gone. Hearken to it now, and thou ſhalt not heare it hereafter. Hearken to the admonitions and reproofes of it now; and thus ſhall thou get Integrity here, and ſhalt be free from hearing the dolefull clamours

mours of it in hell hereafter.

5. To get and keepe a good Conſcience ever in caſes of a doubtfull and queſtionable nature, be ſure to take the ſureſt ſide. Many things are of a queſtionable nature, and much may bee ſaid on either ſide; in ſuch caſes, if thou wouldſt have a good Conſcience, take the ſureſt ſide, that ſide on which thou mayſt be ſure thou ſhalt not ſinne. As for example. There be divers games and recreations whoſe lawfulneſſe are queſtioned, yet much may be ſaid for them, and poſſibly they may have the judgement of divers reverend and learned men for their lawfullneſſe. Now what ſhall a man doe in this caſe? Take the ſure ſide. If I uſe them it is poſſible I may ſinne, it may be they are not ſinnefull, yet I am not ſo ſure of it that I ſhall not ſinne if I uſe them, as I am ſure I ſhall not ſin if I doe not uſe them. I am ſure that not to uſe ſuch ſports breakes none of Gods commandements, a man may bee bold to build upon that. He that lives by this rule, ſhall keepe his Conſcience from many a flaw. He that ſailes amongſt Rockes it is poſſible hee may eſcape ſplitting, but hee is not ſo ſure to keep his veſſell ſafe and whole as

Tutiores igitur vivimus ſi totum Deo damus, non autem nos illi ex parte, & nobis ex parte committimus. *Aug. de dono perſev. cap. 6.*

as he that ſailes in a cleare ſea where no rocks are at all. It is good in matter of life and practice, to doe as *Auguſtine* ſpeakes in caſe of doctrine. *Wee live more ſafely, ſaith he, if wee attribute all wholly to God, and doe not commit our ſelves partly to God, and partly to our ſelves.* In doctrines it is good to hold the *ſafeſt* ſide wherein there can be no danger, yea, *Bellarmine* himſelfe after his long diſpute for juſtification by merit, comes to this at laſt, *That by reaſon of the uncertainty of our owne righteouſneſſe, and the danger of vaine-glory, it is the moſt ſafe way to repoſe our whole confidence in the mercie and goodneſſe of God alone.* Which way ſoever *Bellarmine* is gone himſelfe, or any of his religion, I thinke common reaſon will teach a man ſo much wiſdome to go the *ſafeſt* way to heaven, and that the *ſafeſt* way is the beſt way. The Lord that would have us make our *calling and election ſure*, 2 *Peter* 1. 10. would not have us put ſo great a matter as the ſalvation of our ſoules upon *Bellarmines* hazard, and confeſſed *uncertaintie* of our owne righteouſneſſe. Now as in caſe of doctrine, ſo in caſe of practiſe it is great wiſedome, and a great meanes of keeping a good conſcience, to doe

Propter incertitudinem propriæ Iuſtitiæ & periculum inanis gloriæ, tutiſſimum eſt fiduciam totam in ſola Dei miſericordia & benignitate reponere. *Bellar. de Iuſtific. lib. 5. cap. 7.*

doe that wherein we may *Tutioris vivere*, and to take to that which *Tutiſſimum eſt*, to follow that which is ſafeſt, and to take to that ſide which is the ſureſt, and the freeſt from danger.

Chap. VII.

Two markes if a good Conſcience.

THus wee ſee how a good conſcience may be had; it followes we conſider how it may be knowne, and be diſcerned to be had. The markes and notes by which a good conſcience may bee knowne, are *ſeven*.

1. This in the Text. In *all* good conſcience. It is a good note of a good conſcience, when a man makes conſcience of all things, all duties, and all Sins. There be that have naturall conſciences principled by ſome generall grounds of nature, and it may bee, ſo farre as theſe rules carry them, may make ſome conſcience, but their principles coming ſhort, they muſt needs alſo come as ſhort of a good conſcience: *I have lived*, ſaies *Paul here*, *in all good conſcience*, and *Heb.* 13. 18. *Wee truſt wee have a good*

1. *Note of good conſcience. Conſcience in all things.*

Conſcience in all things. It is a good conſcience when a mans life, all his life is a life of conſcience, when in all his life, and the whole tenour thereof he makes conſcience of all that God commands, and forbids, *Pſal.* 119. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed,* (what breeds ſhame but evill conſcience?) *when I have reſpect unto all thy Commandements.* When *all* are reſpected there is no ſhame, becauſe where all are reſpected there is good conſcience, and where good conſcience is, there is no ſhame. That argued *Davids* good conſcience, *Pſal.* 119. 101. *I have refrained my feet from every evill way.*

Try mens conſciences by this, and it will diſcover a great deale of evill conſcience in the world. Many a morall man makes conſcience of doing his neighbour the leaſt wrong, hee will not wrong or pinch any man, payes every man his owne, deales fairly and ſquarely in his commerce, there is no man can ſay blacke is his eye, you ſhall have him thank God that he hath as good a conſcience as the beſt. Theſe are good things, and ſuch things as men ought to make conſcience of, but yet here is not enough to make a good conſcience. A good conſcience

ſcience muſt be *all* good conſcience, or it is no good conſcience. Now indeed theſe men may have good conſciences *before men*, but my Text tels us that we muſt live in *all* good conſcience *before God*. And *Paul* joines them two together, *Act.* 24. 13. *And herein I doe exerciſe my ſelfe to have a good conſcience voyd of offence towards God, and towards men.* Now be it that theſe have good conſcience before men, yet what have they before God? Alas they are miſerably ignorant in the things of God, no conſciences to acquaint themſelves with his truth, no conſcience of prayer in their families, of reading the Scriptures, no conſcience of an oath, and as little of the Sabbath, and the private duties thereof. How far are theſe from good conſcience?

Others againe ſeeme to make conſcience of their duties before God, but in the meane time no conſcience of duties of Juſtice in the ſecond Table, make no conſcience of oppreſſion, racking rents, covetouſneſſe, over-reaching, &c. theſe are no better conſciences then the former, neither are good becauſe they live not in *all good* conſcience. Thus may a man diſcover the naughty conſcience

of moſt. *Iehu* ſeemes wondrous zealous for the Lord, and ſeemes to be a man of a ſingular good conſcience in the demoliſhing the Tẽple of *Baal*, & putting to death his Prieſts. I, but if *Iehu* make conſcience of letting *Baals* Tẽple ſtand, why doth he not as well make conſcience of letting *Ieroboams* Calves ſtand? If *Iehu* had had a good conſcience, hee would as ill have brookt *Ieroboams* as *Iezebels* Idolatry; he would have purged the land of *all* Idols.

Herod ſeemes to make ſome conſcience of an Oath. *Marke 6. 26. For his Oaths ſake hee would not reject her.* It is joy of him that hee is a man of ſo good conſcience. I, but in the meane time why makes hee no conſcience of inceſt and murther? Hee feares, and makes conſcience to breake an unlawfull Oath, but makes no conſcience to cut an holy Prophets throate. Who would not have thought *Saul* to have beene a man of a very good conſcience? ſee how like a man of good conſcience hee ſpeakes, *1 Sam. 14. 34. Sinne not againſt the Lord in eating with the blood.* Hee would have the people make conſcience of eating with the blood; and indeed it was a thing to be made conſcience of. I, but he tha

make

makes conſcience of eating the fleſh of Sheepe and Oxen with the blood, like a bloodyhearted tyrãt, as he was, he makes no conſcience of ſucking and ſhedding the blood of foureſcore and five of Gods Prieſts, Iuſt the conſcience of his blood-hound *Doeg*. 1 *Sam* 21.7. *Doeg was there that day detained before the Lord*. How deteined? either out of a religious conſcience of the Sabbath, or by occaſion of a vow, the man made conſcience of going before the Sabbath were ended, or the dayes of his vow finiſht. A thing indeed to be made conſcience of, men ought not to depart from Gods houſe, till holy ſervices bee finiſht, a duety that even the Prince muſt make conſcience of, *Ezek*. 46. 10. Who therefore would not judge this *Edomite* a conſcionable *Proſelyte?* I, but why then makes hee no conſcience of Lying? *Pſalm*. 25. Why no conſcience of being inſtrumentall to *Sauls* injuſtice in that barbarous villany of ſlaying, not onely innocent men, but innocent Prieſts of the Lord? ſuch were the Conſciences of the Chiefe Prieſts, *Matth*. 27. 6. How like honeſt conſcionable men they ſpeake: *It is not lawfull for to put them into the treaſury*,

becauſe it is the price of blood. Sure it is, great conſcience ought to bee made of bringing the price of blood into the Temple treaſurie; Are they not then men of good conſcience, *It is not lawfull*, ye ſee they will not doe that which is not lawfull. It is well, but tell me, is it not lawfull to take the price of blood, and is it lawful to give a price for blood? Ought there not a Conſcience to bee made of blood, as well as of the price of blood? They make a Conſcience of receiving the price of blood into the Treaſury, but make no Conſcience of receiving the guilt of blood into their Conſciences. Iuſt ſuch Conſciences as they had, *Ioh.* 18. 28. *They would not go into the Iudgement Hall, leſt they ſhould bee defiled, but that they might eate the Paſſover.* Indeed a man ſhould make great Conſcience of preparation to the Sacrament, and take great heede that he come not thither defiled; but ſee their naughty Conſcience, they make Conſcience of being defiled by going into the judgement Hall, but make no Conſcience of being defiled with the blood of an Innocent. Such was the conſcience of the Iewes, *Ioh.* 19. 31. they make Conſcience of the body of Chriſt hanging

Qualis hæc innocētiæ ſimulatio; pecuniā ſanguinis non mittere in Aream, et ipſum ſanguinem mittere in Conſcientiā *Auguſt.*

hanging on the Croſſe on the Sabbath, but with what conſcience have they hanged it on the Croſſe at all? This was juſt like to thoſe that *Socrates* ſpeaks of, who made great conſcience of keeping Holy-dayes, yet made no conſcience of uncleanneſſe; that was but an indifferent thing with them. As if conſcience were not rather to be made of keeping our veſſels in holineſſe, our bodies, then dayes holy? Remarkable in this kind is that dealing of the *Iewes* with *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 24. *Of the Iewes five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one.* If we looke into the Law, *Deut.* 25. 1, 2, 3. it runs thus, *If there be a controverſie, &c. and it ſhall be if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, the Iudge ſhall cauſe him to lye downe, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certaine number, forty ſtripes hee may give him, and not exceed.* Now ſee the good conſciences of theſe *Iewes*, they might give forty ſtripes, but not beyond that number might they goe. Now they make ſo much conſcience of exceeding the number of forty; that they give *Paul* but nine and thirty. Thus they make conſcience of the number, but no conſcience of the fact;

They

They make conſcience of giving above fortie, but with what conſcience doe they give him any at all? The Text not onely preſcribes the number of ſtripes, but the condition of the perſon, namely, that he be *worthy to be beaten*, and he muſt be puniſhed *according to his fault*. Now ſee theſe men make Conſcience of the law for the number, but make no conſcience of the Law, that will have onely wicked men, and ſuch as are worthy to be beaten, to be ſo uſed. Theſe be the conſciences of wicked men, they make ſeeme of making conſcience in ſome one thing, but make no conſcience of ten others, it may be, of farre greater weight and neceſſity, and herein diſcover they the naughtineſſe of their conſciences. The conſcience therefore is not to be judged good for one, or ſome good actions. *Ioab* turned not after *Abſolom*, but hee turned after *Adoniah*. 1 *King*. 1.28. Whereas a good conſcience that turnes neither to the right hand not the left, would have turned neither after *Adoniah* nor *Abſolom*. A good conſcience and a good converſation muſt goe together. 1 *Pet*. 3. 16. *Having a good Conſcience, that they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your good converſation.*

One

One good action makes not a good converſation, nor a good conſcience, but then a mans converſation may be ſaid to be good, when in his whole courſe he is carefull to do all good duties, and to avoyd all ſinnes, and ſuch a good converſation is a ſigne of good Conſcience.

To doe ſome good things, and not all, is no more a ſigne of good conſcience, then to doe ſome things onely which his maſter requires, and to neglect other ſome, is no ſigne of a good ſervant. A good ſervants commendation is to do all his Maſters buſineſſe hee enjoynes him. Wee would hold him but an holy-day ſervant, and an idle companion, that when his maſter hath ſet him his ſeverall workes to doe, hee will doe which him pleaſes, and leave the other undone. This were not to doe his maſters, but to doe his owne will, and to ſerve his owne turne rather then his maſters: So for a man to make choyce of duties, and to picke out ſome particulars, wherein hee will yeeld obedience to God, and to paſſe by others as not ſtanding with his profits, pleaſures, and luſts, this will never gaine a man the commendation of a good conſcience, whoſe goodnes muſt

Nunc autem in hoc maior offenſa eſt quod partem ſententiæ ſacræ pro commodorum noſtrorum utilitate deligimus, partem pro dei iniuria prætermus, Et maxime cum & terreſtres domini nequaquam æquo animo tolerandum putent ſi iuſſiones ſuas ſerui ex parte audiant & ex parte contemnant. Si enim pro arbitrio ſuo ſervi dominis obtempe rant, ne ijs quidem in quibus obtemperaverint, obſequuntur, &c. *Savian. de Provid.*

muſt bee knowne by making conſcience of *all* things. Then have Gods ſervants good conſciences, when it can be ſayd of them, as *Shaphan* ſpeaks of *Ioſiah* his ſervants. 2 *Chron.* 34. 16. *All that was committed to thy ſervants, they doe it.*

2. To make conſcience of ſmall Duties, and ſmall ſinnes. This alſo riſes out of the Text. *All good Conſcience.* If of *all* things, then of *ſmall* things. It might have beene comprehended under the former, but yet for Conviction ſake I diſtinguiſh them. The good conſcience makes not conſcience onely of great duties and ſinnes, but even of the leaſt, knowing that as Gods great power and omnipotence is the ſame in the making of an Angell and a worme, ſo Gods authority, wiſedome and holineſſe is the ſame in the leaſt Commandements, as in the greateſt of them all. It makes conſcience ſpecially of Judgement, and the weighty matters of the law, but yet doth not therefore thinke it ſelfe diſcharged of all care in ſmaller things, doth not thereupon challenge a diſpenſation from obedience in meaner matters, as if it were needleſſe ſcrupuloſity, as too much preciſeneſſe to tythe

tythe Mint, Aniſe, and Cummin. A Cummin-ſeede indeede is but a ſmall thing, a very toy, but yet as ſmall a thing, and as light as it is, yet will it ly heavie upon a good conſcience, being injuriouſly and fraudulently detayned from the Levites. The *Phariſees* tythed Mint, Aniſe, and Cummin, but they neglected the weighty matters of the Law. It is no good conſcience that lookes to ſmall, and neglects great duties, neither is it a good conſcience on the other ſide, that lookes after the great and weighty duties, and makes no reckoning of Mint and Aniſe. Our Saviour ſayes both ought to bee done. *Pharaoh* could bee content that the people ſhould goe Sacrifice, but hee cannot abide that *Moſes* ſhould bee ſo peeviſhly preciſe, that not an hoofe ſhould be left behind. Alas, an hoofe is but a toy, not worth the mentioning, what need *Moſes* bee ſo ſtrict as to ſtand upon an hoofe? Yet a good conſcience will ſtand upon it, having Gods Commandement, and will make conſcience as well of carrying away hoofes as of whole bodies of Cattell. It is with a good conſcience as it is with the apple of the eye, of

of all the parts of the body it is the moſt tender, not onely of ſome great ſhives, or ſplints under the eye-lid, but even the ſmalleſt haire and duſt grieves and offends it. It is ſo with a tender good conſcience, not onely beames, but alſo moates diſquiet the eye of a good conſcience, and not onely greater, and fouler Sinnes, but even ſuch as the world counts veniall trifles doe offend it. A good conſcience ſtraines not onely at a Camell, but at a Gnat alſo. Neither doth our Saviour blame the Phariſees ſimply for ſtraining at a Gnat, but for their hypocriſie, who would pretend conſcience in ſmaller things, and meane while made none in the greater; for otherwiſe a good conſcience indeed hath a narrow paſſage for a Gnat, as well as for a Camell. The leaſt corne of gravell galls his foot that hath a ſtrait ſhoe, but hee that hath a large, wide ſhooe, ſlopping about his foot, it is no trouble to him. It is juſt ſo with conſciences good and evill.

Bal. pag. of Popes pag. 97.

A Gnat is but a ſmall thing, yet Pope *Hadrian* the fourth was choakt with a Gnat, and one Flye, though but a ſmall thing to a whole boxe of oyntment, yet

dead

dead Flies, as ſmall things as they are, *cauſe the oyntment of the Apothecarie to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour*, Ec. 10. 1. and *ſo doth a little folly*, though but little, doe a great deale of hurt. And therefore a good conſcience lives by *Salomons* rule, *Give not water paſſage, no not a little.* And take not onely the *Foxes*, but the *little Foxes*, which ſpoyle not onely the *Vines*, but the *tender Grapes*. Cant. 2. 15. It knowes a little will make way for much. *Pharaoh* is content that the people, the men ſhould go ſacrifice, *Ex.* 10. but their little *ones* ſhould not goe; he knew if hee had but their little *ones* with him, he ſhould be ſure enough of their return; therefore *Moſes* will not onely have the men goe, but their *little ones alſo*. And therefore a good conſcience deales with Satan, as *Marcus Arethuſius* dealt with his tormentours, who having pulled downe an Idolatrous Temple, and being urged by them to give ſo much as would build it up againe, refuſed it; They urged him to give but halfe, hee ſtill refuſed, they urged him at laſt to give but a *little* towards it, but he refuſed to give them ſo much as one halfe-penny. *No not an halfe-penny*, ſayes he, *for*

Putantes pauperem vel mediocratem petebant pecuniarum, noviſſime vel paucum aliquid exigebant. Quibus ait nec obolum unum pro omnibus dabo. *Hiſt. Tripart. lib. 6. cap.* 12.

Ad impietatem inquit obulum conferre unum perinde valet, ac ſi quis cõferat omnia. *Theodor. lib. 3. cap. 7.*

for it is as great wickedneſſe to conferre one halfe penny in caſe of Impiety, as if a man ſhould beſtow the whole. What was a poore halfe-penny? it was a very ſmall matter; ſpecially conſidering in what torture he was, from which an half-penny gift would haue releaſed him. Indeed an half-penny is but a little, but yet it is more then a good Conſcience dares give to the maintenance of idolatrous worſhip. A good conſcience will not give ſo much as a farthing token to ſuch an uſe, as little a thing as it is. *For he that is faithfull in that which is leaſt, is faithfull alſo in much, and he that is unjuſt in the leaſt, is unjuſt alſo in much,* Luke 16. 10. Even the leaſt things are as great trials of a good conſcience, as the greateſt. A good Conſcience will not gratifie Satan, nor neglect God, no not in a little.

Put mens conſciences now vpon this triall. Who crakes not of his good conſcience? there be none, if they may bee beleeved, but they have good Conſciences. But why are they good? They can ſwallow no Camells. Well, yeeld them that, though if their entrals were well ſearcht, a man might finde huge bunch backt camells, that have gone downe their gullets

lets. They can ſwallow no camells, but what ſay they to gnats, can they ſwallow them? Tuſh, Gnats are nothing, whole ſwarmes of them can goe downe their throats, and they never once cough for the matter. Foule and groſſe ſcandalls, ſuch as are infamous amongſt meere heathen, ſuch Camells they ſwallow not, but what ſay they to unſavorie and naughtie thoughts which their hearts proſecute with delight, what ſay they to them? Gnats doe not ſwarme more abundantly in the fennes, then ſuch vile thoughts doe in their hearts. The prodigious oaths of wounds, blood, the damned language of Ruffians, and the Monſters of the earth; Oh their hearts would tremble to have ſuch words paſſe out of their mouths, but yet what ſay they to the neater, and civilified Complements of Faith and Troth? Tuſh theſe are trifles, meere Gnats, alas, that you ſhall ſtand upon ſuch niceties. To rob a man upon the high way, or to breake up a mans houſe in the night, this is a monſtrous Camell, but in buying and ſelling to over-reach a neighbour a ſhilling or two, a penny or two, what ſay they to that? Oh God forbid they ſhould be ſo ſtrictly dealt withall, that is a ſmall

thing, their throats are not ſo narrow, but theſe Gnats will goe downe eaſily enough. To beare falſe witneſſe in an open Court of Iuſtice, or to be guilty of pillory-perjury, theſe bee foule things, but to lye a little for a mans advantage or to make another man merriment, what thinke they of this? This is a very Gnat, they are aſhamed to ſtraine thereat. Tell many a man of his ſinne in which he lyes, that his ſinne and a good conſcience cannot ſtand together, what is his anſwer, but as *Lot* of *Zoar, Is it not a little one. Gen.* 19. 20, But the truth is, that theſe little ones are great evidences of evill conſcience. It is but a dreame to thinke our conſciences good, that make no conſcience of ſmall ſinnes and duties.

The conſcionable *Nazarite*, now, did not only make conſcience of guzling and quaffing whole cups of wine, but of eating but an huske, and a kernell of a Grape. What a trifle is the kernell of a Grape, and yet a good conſcience will care to pleaſe God as well in abſtinence from the kernell, as from the cup. Indeed when *David* had defiled and hardned his conſcience with his adultery, then hee could cut *Vriahs* throat, and his heart

ſmites

ſmites him not for it, but when under his affliction his conſcience was tender and good, his heart ſmites him but for cutting *Sauls* coat, 1*Sam*.24.5. See the nature of a good conſcience, it will ſmite not onely for cutting *Sauls* throat, but for cutting *Sauls* coat, but for an appearance, vpon a ſuſpicion, and but a iealouſie of evill.

Paul ſpeakes of a *pure Conſcience*, 2*Tim*.1.3. Nowit is with the pure conſcience as it is with *pure Religion*, Iam. 1.17. *Pure religion and undefiled, is to keepe a mans ſelfe* unſpotted *of the world*. It hates not onely wallowing with the Sow in the mire, but is ſhie of very ſpots, and *hates* not only the *fleſh*, but the *garment*, not onely that is groſely beſmeared, but which is but *ſpotted with the fleſh*, *Iude* 23. according to that Ceremonial, *Levit*.15. 17. And this is that which differences civility and a good Conſcience, Civility ſhunnes mire, but is not ſo trim as to waſh off ſpots, this is the pure Religion of a pure Conſcience. *Pure Religion and undefiled, is to keep a mans ſelfe unſpotted*, therefore they who are not unſpoted, are not undefiled, but if their conſciences be but ſpotted, yet are they defiled. Mens conſciences are as their Religion is, and

pure Religion is ſpotleſſe.

Yea to cloſe this point, the greateſt evidence of a good conſcience is in making Conſcience of ſmall things. Whilſt men feare great ſinnes, or are carefull of maine duties, it may bee their reputation and credits may ſway them, which otherwiſe would be impeached. So that in them it may be a queſtion, whether it be Conſcience or Credit that is the firſt mover, but in ſmaller things where there is no credit to be had, nay, for ſcrupling whereof, a man may rather receive ſome diſcredit from the world, here it is more evident that good Conſcience ſets a man on. This then is a note of a good Conſcience, to make Conſcience, as of ſmall duties, ſo of ſmall ſinnes; as hee that feares poiſon, feares to take a drop, as well as a draught, and men feare not onely when a firebrand is thruſt into, but when a ſparke lights upon their thatch.

Probat enim etiam in majoribus ſi res exigat executorem ſe idoneum fore à quo minora compleantur. *Salvian de provid. l. 3.*

Chap. VIII.

Three other notes of a good Conſcience.

A Third note of good conſcience may be this. It loves and likes a Miniſtry and

and ſuch Miniſters as preach, and ſpeake to the Conſcience. It likes ſuch a diſpenſation of the Word as comes home to it, whether for direction or reproofe. The Word is the rule of conſcience, and a good conſcience is deſirous to know the rule it muſt live by. The Word muſt judge the conſcience, this every good conſcience knowes, and therefore grudges not to be reproved by it, as knowing that if it will not abide the Words reproofe, it muſt abide the Words iudgement. Therefore a man with a good conſcience ſpeakes as *Samuel, Speake Lord, thy ſervant heares*. He can ſuffer the words of exhortation, and not count himſelfe to ſuffer whilſt it is done. He is of *Davids* minde, *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſſe; let him reproue me and it ſhall bee an excellent oyle which ſhall not breake mine head. Pſal.* 141. 5. It is with good conſcience as with good eyes that can abide the light, and can delight in it, whereas ſicke and ſore eyes are troubled and offended therewith. A ſound heart is like ſound fleſh that can abide not onely touching, but alſo rubbing and chafing, and yet a man will not bee put into a chafe thereby; whereas contrarily if the

3. Note of good conſcience: To love a Miniſtry that ſpeaks home to the conſcience.

leaſt thorne or vnſoundneſſe bee therein, a touch at vnawares provokes a man, if not to ſmite, yet to angry words and language of diſpleaſure. Vnſound fleſh loves to be ſtroakt, and to be handled gently, the leaſt roughneſſe puts into a rage. That is the ingenuity of a good conſcience, which was the good diſpoſition of *Alipius*, when hee was vnwittingly taxed by *Auguſtine* for his Theatricall vanities; hee was ſo farre from being angry with him, though he conceived him purpoſely to ayme at him, that hee was rather angry with himſelfe, and loved *Auguſtine* ſo much the better.

Tu ſcis Deus noſter, quod tunc de Alipio ab illa peſte ſanando non cogetaverim. At ille in ſe rapuit meq; illud non niſi propter ſe dixiſſe credidit, & quod alias acciperet ad ſuccenſendum mihi, accepit honeſtus adoleſcens ad ſuccenſendum ſibi, & ad me ardentius diligendum. *Aug. conf. lib. 6. ca. 7.*

Put mens conſciences vpon this triall, and we ſhall ſee what the conſciences of moſt men are. Let a man preach in an vnprofitable maner, let him ſpend himſelfe in idle curioſities and ſpeculations, let him be in combate with obſolete or forraine hereſies, ſo long their Miniſter is a faire and a good Churchman. But let him doe as God commands *Ezekiel* to doe, *Ezek.* 14. 4. *Anſwer them according to their Idols*, preach to their neceſſities, let him call them, and preſſe them to holy duties, and reprove them for their vnholy practiſes, and make knowne vnto them what

evil

evill conſciences they have: what then is their carriage and behaviour? Even that, *Amos.5.10. They hate him that rebukes in the gate; and they abhorre him that ſpeaks vprighly.* This Miniſtry that comes to the conſcience will not downe with them. It lets in too much light vpon them, and *Ahab* hates *Micaiah* for drawing the curtains ſo wide open, he cannot endure ſuch punctuall and particular preaching that clappes ſo cloſe to his conſcience. A plaine ſigne that *Ahab* hath a rotten and an vnſound Conſcience. *Micaiah* could not be more punctuall with *Ahab*, then *Iſaiah* was with *Hezekiah*, *Iſa.39.6, 7.* And yet what ſayes *Hezekiah? Good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken*; as if he had ſaid, a good Sermon, a good Preacher, all good. Whence comes this good entertainment of ſo harſh a meſſage? *Hezekiah* had a good Conſcience, and therefore though the meſſage went againſt the haire, yet he could give good words, *Let the righteous ſmite mee, and it ſhall be a kindneſſe, Pſal.141.* I, but that is whē the righteous ſmites the righteous, what if the Prophet ſmite *Amaziah?* he will threaten to ſmite him againe, *2 Chron.25.16. Forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou*

Scio me offenſurum quam plurimos qui generalem de vitiis diſputationem in ſuam referunt contumeliam, & dum mihi iraſcuntur ſuam judicant conſcientiam, multoq; prius de ſe quam de me judicant. *Hieron. ad Ruſtic. Monach.*

thou be smitten? Why if *Paul* preach of a good Conscience, and so make *Ananias* his Conscience to smite him? *Ananias* will commaund the standers by to smite him on the mouth. Now let all the standers by judge whether *Ananias* have any good Conscience in him, who cannot brook the preaching of good Cõscience. Let men professe they know God as long as they will, yet if they slight the word, or swel at it, or be disobedient to it when it is laid to their Conscience, *Paul* makes it a manifest signe of a defiled conscience, *Tit.*1.15,16. *Their mind and their conscience is defiled.* How appeares that? *They professe they know God, but they are disobedient.* When therfore the Ministry of the Word shall charge thee with dutie, or reproove thee for sinne, and then thou shalt charge the Minister with railing, and girding, and that this Sermon was made for the nonce for thee, & thou likest not that Ministers should be so particular, &c. In Gods feare bee advised to looke to thy Conscience, and know it that thou hast a naughtie conscience: when the Ministry of the Word smites thy conscience, then for thee to smite the Minister with reprochfull and disgracefull termes, to

smite

ſmite him with thy mouth: How is thy conſcience better then *Ananias* his, that commands to ſmite *Paul* on the mouth? he that cannot brooke that Gods Miniſters ſhould not diſcharge a good conſcience in preaching to the conſcience, be bold to challenge that man for a man of an evill conſcience.

4. That is a fourth note of a good conſcience, *Rom.* 13.5. ye muſt be ſubject for *conſcience ſake*. To doe good, or abſtaine from evill meerly for conſcience ſake, is a note of a right good conſcience indeed. Conſcience, as we ſaw before, doth excite and ſtirre up, and bind to the doing of good, and bind from the doing of evill. Now when the conſcience upon juſt information from the Word, ſhall preſſe, and forbid, and then a man ſhall, becauſe conſcience forbids, forbeare, or becauſe it preſſes, performe obedience: thus to doe good, or not to doe evill, for conſcience ſake, is a note of a good conſcience. It evidences a good conſcience when the maine weight that ſets the wheeles on worke is conſcience of Gods cõmandement. When it is that, *Pſ.* 119.4. that ſets a man on work, *Thou haſt cõmanded us to keep thy precepts diligently*.

4 Note of a good conſcience. To doe duty for conſcience ſake.

The

The end of the commandement is love, 1 *Tim.* 1.5. and *love is the fulfilling of the commandement*, *Rom.* 12. But what love? *From a pure heart, and a good conſcience*, 1 *Tim.* 1.5. When conſcience of the commandement carries a man to the fulfilling of the end of it, then doth ſuch love come frō a good conſcience. *Salomons* deſcription of a good man, *Eccl.* 9.2. is that *he fears an oath*. He ſaies not, that ſwears not; but that feares an oath. For a man not to ſweare may be the fruit of good education, and of the awe a man hath ſtood in of his Governours, but to *feare an oath*, argues that a man *feares the commandement*, *Prov.* 13.13. and to feare the commandement is the note of a good conſcience.

Here let mens conſciences be tried. Thou prayeſt in thy family, heareſt the Word, keepeſt the Sabbath, &c. Now ſearch thine heart, and make inquirie what it is that carrieth thee to theſe duties. Doeſt thou do them for conſcience ſake? Doeſt thou find conſcience to urge and preſſe thee, and to give ſatisfaction of the conſcience, and obedience to the injunctions thereof. Are theſe things done? If ſo, it is a ſigne of a good conſcience.

But

But this diſcovers the naughtineſſe of mens conſciences, who though they be ſound in ſome good duties, or in the avoyding of ſome evils, yet is it not conſcience that workes them thereto. *Yee muſt be ſubject, not onely for wrath*, that is, for feare of the Magiſtrates wrath and revenge, *but for conſcience ſake, Rom.* 13. 5. It is no good conſcience when a man will be ſubject for his skins ſake, and leſt hee ſmart by the Magiſtrates ſword, but then a mans conſcience is good, when in obedience to Gods Word, and in conſcience of his commandement he ſubjects. The like may be ſaid of all by-ends. Ye muſt doe good duties, not for profit, not for credit, not for vaine-glory, not for law, but for conſcience ſake; or elſe evill conſciences ye have in that ye doe. The *Shechemites* receive circumciſion, *Gen.* 34. And is not circumciſion Gods Ordinance? And is it not joy of them that they will joyne to the Church, and profeſſe the true Religion? Yes ſurely, if it were done for conſcience. I, but it is not done for conſcience ſake. Alas no ſuch matter, but for *Hamors* ſake the Lord of the Towne, and for *Shechems* ſake, their young Maſter, and for the hope of gaines ſake:

ſake: *Shall not their cattell, and their ſubſtance, and every beaſts of theirs be ours?* *Gen.* 34. 23. For the oxen ſake, and not for conſcience ſake are the *Shechemites* circumciſed. *Shechem* for *Dinahs* ſake receives the Sacrament. Oh the zeale and forwardneſſe that ſome will profeſſe on a ſudden. What frequenters of holy exerciſes? But what, is it for conſcience ſake? No ſuch matter, but *Shechem* is in hope of a match with *Dinah*, and all theſe ſhowes of Religion are neither for Gods ſake, nor conſcience ſake, but all for *Dinahs* ſake, all under hope of preferment by a rich marriage. They were goodly ſhewes of zeale, *Ioh.* 6. 22. 24. in ſeeking and following after Chriſt, but it was neither for Chriſt, nor conſcience ſake, but *ver.* 26. for the loaves, and the bread, and their bellies ſake.

Many of the heathens, *Eſth*, 8. 17. *turned Iewes*. Was there not joy of ſuch Proſelytes? not a whit, for not the fear of God, but the *feare of the Iewes fell upon them*; as many frequent the publicke aſſemblies more for feare of the ſtatute, then for fear of the commandement. The officers of the King helped the Iewes, *Eſther* 9. 3. Was it for conſcience ſake? Nothing

leſſe

leſſe, but for wrath ſake, and for feare, *becauſe the feare of Mordecai fell upon them.*

If the Phariſes had done all that (*Mat.* 6.) for conſcience ſake, which they did for vaine-glory ſake, they had had the glory of good conſciences. Many preached the Goſpel in *Pauls* daies, *Phil.* 1. Does not ſo good a worke argue a good conſcience? Yes, if it had beene done for conſcience ſake; but that was done for contention ſake, not to adde ſoules to the Church, but to adde ſorrowes to *Pauls* afflictions.

It is a note of a good conſcience, when that which we doe is done with a reſpect unto the commandement of God, *Pſal.* 119.6. and not with a ſquint reſpect unto our owne private, for praiſe or profit. It was a good argument of thoſe *Bohemians* good conſciences in plucking downe Images, that they beate downe onely painted and wooden Images, whilſt *Sigiſmund* the Emperour pulled downe ſilver and golden ones, to melt into money for pay of his Souldiers, as they plead for themſelves, when they were held Heretikes for their fact. If they had pulled downe ſuch Images as hee did, they might have beene thought to have

Vtrinè majores hæreticî? illine quî pictas & ligneas, an quî aureas & argenteas imagines è templis exigerent, & ad conflandam monetam igne adurerent? *Dubyo. hiſt. Bohe. l. 24.*

have done it for gaine, and not for conſcience ſake.

How great is often the zeale of many againſt faſhions, and ſuch vanities? How well it were if it were for conſcience ſake, and not for envy againſt ſome particular perſon, whom they doe diſtaſte, and ſo for the perſon, the vanity For if it be for conſcience ſake, how is it that thoſe vanities, ſuch great offences to their conſciences found in ſome diſtaſted perſons, are yet no trouble to their conſciences, being the very ſame, if not worſe in their owne favourites, and aſſociates? Iudge whether ſuch zeale come from conſcience, or from corrupt affection, whether it be not more againſt the perſon, then againſt the ſinne.

5. *Note of a good conſcience.* *Holy boldneſſe.* Bona conſcientia prodire vult & conſpici, ipſas nequitias tenebras timet. *Senec. ep. 98.* Qui non deliquit decet audacem eſſe & confidenter proſe, & proterve loqui. *Plaut. in Amph.*

5. We have a fift note of a good conſcience in the Text. *And Paul earneſtly beholding the Councell.* Here is a marke of a good conſcience in his lookes, as well as in his words; in his face, as well as in his ſpeech. *Paul* is here convented before the Councell, with what face is hee able to behold them? And *Paul* earneſtly *beholding the Councell.* A good conſcience makes a man hold up his head even in the thickeſt of his enemies. It can looke

looke them in the faces, and out-face a whole rabble of them aſſembled on purpoſe to caſt diſgrace on it. That may be ſaid of a man with a good conſcience, which is ſpoken of ſome of *Davids* men, 1 *Chron.* 12. 8. *Whoſe faces were like the faces of Lions, for the righteous is bold as a Lion, Prov.* 28.1. Now might *Paul* truely have ſaid, as *David, Pſ.* 57. 4. *My ſoule is among Lions, I ly among them that are ſet on fire.* And now how fares hee? what is he all amort? lookes he pale and blanke? doth he ſneake or hang downe his head, or droope with a dejected countenance? No, *Paul* is as bold as a Lion, and can face theſe Lions, and *earneſtly* fixe his countenance upon the beſt of them. A good conſcience makes a mans face as God had made *Ezekiels, Ez.* 3.8,9. *Behold I have made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy forehead ſtrong againſt their foreheads. As an Adamant harder then flint have I made thy forehead, feare them not, neither be diſmaid at their lookes.* Such hartening and hardening comes alſo from a good conſcience. A good conſcience makes a man goe, as the Lord in another ſenſe tells Iſraell he had done for them, *Levit.* 26.13. *I have made*

made you goe upright. A good conſcience erects a mans face, and lookes, it is no ſneaking ſlinker, but makes a man goe upright. As contrarily, guilt dejects both a mans ſpirits, and his lookes, and unleſſe a man have a Sodomiticall impudencie, *Iſa.* 3. 9. or an whores forehead, *Ier.* 3. 3. which refuſes to be aſhamed, makes him hang downe the head.

Paul fixes his eyes here, and lookes earneſtly upon them, but what if they had looked as earneſtly upon him? yet would not his good conſcience have beene out-faced. See *Act.* 6. 15. *All that ſate in the Councel looked ſtedfaſtly on him*; namely on *Steven.* If but the high Prieſt alone had faced him, it had beene ſomewhat, but all that ſate at the Councell looked ſtedfaſtly on him. Surely one would thinke ſuch a preſence were able to have damped, and utterly to have daſhed him out of countenance. But how is it with him? Is hee appalled? Is hee damped? *They ſaw his face as it had beene the face of an Angell*, ſayes the text. As wiſedome, *Eccl.* 8. 1. ſo a good conſcience makes the face to ſhine. A good conſcience hath not onely a *Lions*, but an *Angels* face; it hath not onely a Lion-like boldneſſe, but an

Ange-

Angelicall dazling brightneſſe, which the ſicke and ſore eyes of malice can as ill indure to behold, as the Iſraelites could the ſhining brightneſſe of *Moſes* face. The face of a good conſcience tels enemies that they are malicious Lyars. And no wonder that a good conſcience hath ſuch courage and confidence in the face, ſtanding before a whole Councell, when it ſhall be able to hold up it head with boldneſſe before the Lord himſelfe, at that great day of the generall Iudgement. Even then ſhall a good conſcience have a bold face.

Chap. XI.

Two other, and the laſt notes of a good conſcience.

A Sixt note of a good conſcience followes, namely that which we have, 1 *Pet.* 2. 19. When a man *for conſcience towards God endures griefe, ſuffering wrong.* A good conſcience had rather that *Ananias* ſhould ſmite, then it ſelfe ſhould. *Ananias* his blowes are nothing to the blowes of conſcience. *Ananias* may make *Pauls* cheekes glow, but con-

6. Note of conſcience, To ſuffer for conſcience.

ſcience gives ſuch terrible buffets, as will make the ſtouteſt heart in the world to ake. That will pinch, and twitch and gird the heart with ſuch griping throwes, that all the blowes, and tortures that *Ananias* his cruell heart can invent are nothing to them.

Now therefore a man that ſets any ſtore by a good conſcience, will not part with the Peace or Integrity thereof upon any termes. Hee rates the goodneſſe of his conſcience far above al earthly things. Wealth, liberty, wife, children, life it ſelfe, all are vile, and cheape in comparison of it. And therefore a man of a good conſcience will endure any griefe, and ſuffer any wrong to keepe his conſcience good towards God. Such a good conſcience had *Daniel*, *Dan.* 1. 8. *Hee propoſed in his heart that hee would not defile himſelfe with the portion of the Kings meat.* That is, he was fully ſetled and reſolved in his cõſcience, come what would come, he would not do that which would not ſtand with a good conſcience. But what if it could have gotten no other meate without all doubt he would rather have ſtarved than have defiled his conſcience with that meat. Hee would have

loſt his life, rather than have loſt the Peace, and Integrity of his conſcience. It ſeemes a queſtion of great difficulty, which was put to the three Children; *Dan.* 3. Whether they will give the bowing of their bodies to the golden Idoll, or the burning of their bodies to the fiery Furnace. But yet they find no ſuch difficulty therin, they were not carefull to anſwer in that matter, *ver.* 16. Of the two fires they choſe the cooleſt, & the eaſieſt. The fire of a guilty conſcience is ſeven times hotter, and more intolerable than the fire of *Nebuchadnezzars* Furnace, though it be heated ſeven times more then it is wont to be heated.

If the queſtion come betweene life and good conſcience, that one of the two muſt be parted withall, it is an hard caſe. Life is wondrous ſweet and precious. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life, *Iob* 2. 4. What then ſhould a man do in ſuch a hard caſe? Heare what is the reſolution of a good conſcience, *Act.* 20.24. *My life not deare unto me, ſo that I may fulfill my Miniſtration with joy.* And wherein lay his joy, but in his good conſcience, 2 *Corinth.* 1.12. It is all one as if hee had ſaid, I care not to loſe my

life to keepe a good conſcience. A good conſcience in that paſſage of the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. is ſecretly compared to a ſhip. Now in a tempeſt at Sea, when the queſtion is come to this, whether the goods ſhall be caſt out, or the Ship be caſt away, what doe the Marriners? See *Act.* 27.18.38. *They lightned the Ship, and caſt out the wheat into the Sea.* The Marriners will turne the richeſt Commodities overboard to ſave the Ship, for they know if the Ship be caſt away, then themſelves are caſt away. Thus it is with a man that hath a good conſcience, when the caſe comes to this pinch, that either his outward Comforts, or his inward Peace muſt wrack, hee will cheerfully *caſt the wheat into the ſea:* will part with all earthly commodities and comforts, before he will ruſh, and wrack his conſcience upon any rock. He knowes if the ſhip be wrackt if his conſcience be crackt, that then himſelfe, and his ſoule is in danger of being caſt away, and therefore hee will throw away all to ſave conſcience from being ſplit upon the rocks, and being ſwallowed up in the ſands.

There is as great a difference between a good conſcience, and all outward things even

even unto life it ſelfe, as is betweene the arme, and the head or heart. The braine and the heart are vitall parts, therefore when the head is in danger to be cleft, or the heart to be thruſt through, a man will not ſtand queſtioning whether hee were beſt adventure his hand, or his arme to ſave his head, or his heart, but either of theſe being in danger, the hand and the arme preſently interpoſe themſelves to receive the blow, and put themſelves in danger of being wounded, or cut off, rather than the head or heart ſhould be pierced. A man may have his hand, or arme cut off, and yet may live, but a wound in the braine or heart is mortall. It is ſo in this caſe. A good conſcience values its owne peace above all the world. It is that wherin a Chriſtians life lyes, therfore he will ſuffer the right hand or foot to be cut off, and loſe all rather than expoſe conſcience to danger. A man may go to heaven with the loſſe of a limbe, and though he halt, *Math.* 18.8. but if a man loſe his life, if conſcience be loſt, all is loſt. A man may goe to heaven though hee loſe riches, liberty, life, but if a good conſcience be loſt, there is no comming thither. All things compared to conſcience are as

far beneath it, as the leaſt finger beneath the head. He were a mad man that would ſuffer his skull to be cleft to ſave his little finger, nay but the paring of his naile. And yet the world is full of ſuch mad men, that ſuffer conſcience to receive many a deepe wound and gaſh, to ſave thoſe things which in compariſon of good conſcience, are but as the nayle parings to the head.

Try mens conſciences here, and we ſhall find them exceeding ſhort. A good conſcience will endure any griefe, and ſuffer any wrong rather then ſuffer the loſſe of its owne peace. God commands *Amaziah*, 2 Chron. 25. to put away *Iſrael*, oh! but *what ſhall I doe for mine hundred Talents?* Tuſh, what are an hundred Talents? A good conſcience in yielding obedience to God is a richer treaſure than the Eaſt and Weſt *Indies*. And yet how many be there that will craze their conſcience an hundred times before they will loſe one Talent by obedience to God, out of a care to keepe a good conſcience. A talent; nay, that is too deepe, never put them to that coſt, they will ſell a good conſcience, not for gaining, but for the taking of a farthing token. God and

good

good conſcience ſay, *Sanctifie the Sabbath.* Poſſibly ſome halfe-penny cuſtomer comes to a Tradeſmans Shop on a Sabbath, and askes the ſale of ſuch, or ſuch a commoditie. Now the mans conſcience tels him of the commandement, tels him what God lookes for, tels him it cannot ſtand with his peace to make markets on that day, &c. But then he tels conſcience, that if hee be ſo preciſe, hee may loſe a cuſtomer, and if hee loſe his cuſtomers, he may ſhutte up his Shop-windowes. An Inne-keepers conſcience tels him that it is fitter that hee ſhould bee attending Gods ſervice at his houſe on his day, than that hee ſhould be waiting on his gueſt. But then he replies to conſcience, that then his takings will be but poore, and this is the next way to pluck downe his ſigne. So here lyes a diſpute between Conſcience and Gaine, which of theſe two muſt be parted with. If now in this caſe a man will grow to this reſolution; By Gods helpe I am reſolved to keepe a good conſcience in keeping Gods Commandement and Sabbath, I will rather loſe the beſt cuſtomer I have, and the beſt gueſt I have, then the peace of a good conſcience. If I beg, I beg;

I will say of my customers as *Iacob* of his children, *Gen.* 43. 14. *If I am bereaved of them, I am bereaved.* I will trust God with my estate, before I will hazard my conscience; Give me such a man, such a Tradesman, and I will be bold to say he is a man of a good conscience. But contrarily, when men are so set upon gaine, that so they may have it, they care not how they come by it, they will dispense an hundred times with their obedience to God if any thing be to be had, if these have good consciences let any judge. How would such lose their blood and lives, that will not lose such trifling gaines for the safety of their conscience? Wee *have not yet resisted unto blood*, the more we owe to God, that know not what that resistance meanes. Alas, how would those resist unto blood that set conscience to sale upon so base prices as they doe.

Peter speakes of a *fiery triall*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. If God should ever bring that triall amongst us, what a company of drossie consciences would it find out? Wee have no *fiery tryall*, we have but an *airy tryall* onely, and yet how many evill consciences it discovers. Many a man could find in his heart to pray in his family, to

- frequent

frequent good exerciſes, and company, hee is convinced in his conſcience, that thus he ſhould doe, and conſcience preſſes him to it. But why then are not theſe things done? *A Lyon is in the way.* Hee ſhall loſe the good word and opinion of the world, he ſhall have ſo many frowns, and frumps, and cenſures, and ſcoffes, that he cannot buckle to this courſe. Many are in *Zedekiah* his caſe; he was convinced in his conſcience, that he ought, and it was his ſafeſt courſe to goe out to the *Chaldeans*, queſtionleſſe his conſcience preſt him to it, and bids him goe out. Why then goes he not? He is afraid, *Ier.* 38. 19. *that he ſhall be mockt.* Such conſciences as will not preferre their owne good word, a comfort before the good or ill words of the world; Such conſciences as more feare the mocks and flouts of men on earth, then they doe the grinning mocks of the devils in hell; Such as will not preferre the peace of conſcience before all other things, are meere ſtrangers to good conſcience.

The ſeventh and laſt note remaines. And that is in the Text, *Vntill this day*, *Conſtancie* and *Perſeverance* in good, is a ſure note of a good conſcience. *Paul* had beene

7. *Note of a good conſcience.* *Conſtancie in good.*

beene young, and now was old, and yet was old *Paul* ſtill, ſtill the ſame holy man hee was. Time changes all things but a good conſcience, and that is neither changed by Time, nor with Time; Age changes a mans favour, but not a good mans faith; his complexion, not his religion; and though his head turne gray, yet his heart holds vigorous ſtill.

Vntill this day.] And this day was not farre from his dying day. And how held he out to his laſt day? Heare as it were his laſt and dying breath, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith.* He ſayes not, I have finiſhed my faith, I have kept my life, as many may, but *I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith.* He kept his faith till he had finiſht his courſe, not only here, *untill this day*, but there untill his finiſhing day. So long hee kept the faith, and therefore ſo long a good conſcience, for as the loſing of them goe together, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. ſo the keeping of them goe together, therefore keeping the faith, he alſo kept a good conſcience till he finiſht his dayes.

Vntill this day.] And yet one wou'd wonder that hee ſhould keepe it to this day;

day, conſidering how hardly he had been uſed before, untill, and now at this day, the moſt of thoſe things, 2 *Cor.* 11. 23. were before this day. *Often under ſtripes, in priſons oft,* and yet ſtands conſtant in the maintenance of the liberty of his conſcience, *verſ.* 24, 25. *Thrice I ſuffered ſhipwracke, &c.* and yet made no ſhipwracke of a good conſcience, *verſ.* 26, 27. in a number of perils, in *perill of falſe brethren,* and yet his conſcience playes not falſe with God, neither is it weary of going on in a religious courſe.

Here then is the nature of a good conſcience, and the tryall of it.

A good conſcience holds out conſtantly in a good *Cauſe*, without *Deflection*, and in a good *Courſe* without *Defection*.

1. In a *good cauſe*. Let a good conſcience undertake the defence of a good Cauſe, and it will ſtand rightly to it, and neither grow weary nor corrupt. It will not make ſhewes of countenancing *Pauls* cauſe till he come before *Nero*, and then give him the ſlippe, and give him leave to ſtand upon his owne bottome, and ſhift for himſelfe as well as hee can. A conſcionable Magiſtrate, and a Iudge, who out of a conſcience of the faithfull

diſcharge

diſcharge of his place, takes in hand the defence of a good, or the puniſhment of a bad cauſe, will not leave it in the ſuddes, will not be wrought by feare or favour, to let Innocency be thruſt to the walls, and Iniquity hold up the neb, but will ſtand out ſtiffe, and manifeſt the goodneſs of his conſcience in his Conſtancie.

2. In a *good Courſe*. A man that is once in a good courſe, having a good conſcience, wil neither be driven, nor be drawn out of that good way to his dying day. There be tentations on the right hand, and there be tentations on the left, but yet a good conſcience will turne neither way, *Pro.*4,27. but keepes on fore right, and preſſes hard to the marke that is ſet before it; Try it with tentations on the left hand. Try it by the mockings and deriſions, of others whom it ſees in good wayes will this ſtagger or ſtumble it, and make it ſtart aſide? not awhit, but it wil go on with ſo much the more courage rather *Iob* 17,6,7,8,9. *He hath made me alſo a by-word of the people, and aforetime I was a Tabret.* Was not this enough to ſhake others, to ſee ſuch a prime man as *Iob* thus uſed, thus ſcorned and mocked? not a whit; for all this, *The righteous ſhall hold*

hold on his way, and hee that hath cleane hands, be ſtronger and ſtronger.

Try it by mockings and deriſions perſonall, by perſonall infamy and reproach, let a mans owne ſelfe be derided, be defamed, this will goe neerer than the former, what, will this move him out of the way? No: He will loſe his good name, before his good conſcience. See *Pſ.* 119. 51. *The proud have had me greatly in deriſion, yet have I not declined from thy Law.* And though *Michol*, 2 *Sam.* 6. play the flouting foole, yet *David* will not play the declining foole, but if to be zealous, be to be a foole, he will *be yet more vile.* And though *Ieremy* was in *deriſion daily, and every one mocked him*, yea, *and defamed him*, yet he was rather the more than the leſſe zealous, *Ier.* 20. 7, 9, 10. The righteous *Pſal.* 135. 1. are *like Mount Sion that cannot be removed, but abides for ever.* What likelihood that a puffe of breath ſhould remove a Mountaine? When men can blow downe Mountaines with their breath, then may they ſcoffe a good conſcience out of the waies of godlineſſe and ſinceritie. Mount *Sion*, and a good conſcience abide for ever.

But theſe happily may be thought lighter

Si reddere beneficium non aliter quam per ſpeciem injuriæ poteo, æquiſſimo animo ad honeſtum conſilium per medium infamiam ædam. Nemo mihi videtur pluris virtutem, nemo illi magis eſſe devotus quam qui boni viri famam perdidit ne conſcientiam perderet. *Senec. epi.* 82.

ter trials, put a good conſcience to ſome more ſmarting, and bleeding trials, then theſe pettier ones are, and yet there ſhall we find it as conſtant as in the former.

Let the Lord give the *Sabeans, Chaldeãs,* and ſatan leave to ſpoile *Iob* of his goods, and children, will not then *Iob* give up his Integrity? doe ye not thinke that he will curſe God to his face? So indeed the devill hopes, *Iob* 1.15. But what is the iſſue? what gets the devill by the triall? one-ſy gives God argument of triumph againſt him in *Iobs* conſtancie, *Iob* 2.3. *And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.* As if he had ſaid, See for all that thou canſt doe, in ſpight of all thy ſpight, and miſchievous malice, he holds faſt his Integrity untill this day. See the terrible trials, to which they were put, *Heb.* 11.37. *They were ſtoned, ſawne aſunder, &c.* and yet all could not make them ſhake hands with a good cõſcience. The raine, floods, and winds, could not bring downe the houſe founded upon the rocke, *Mat.* 7. Notwithſtanding all trials, a good conſcience ſtands to it, and holds it owne, and ſpeakes as once Father *Rawlins* did the Biſhop, *Rawlins you left mee, Rawlins you find me, and Rawlins by Gods grace I will continue.*

Acts and Mon.

Try

Try yet a good conſcience farther, with the tentations on the right hand, which commonly have as much more ſtrength in them above the other, as the right hand hath above the left, and yet we ſhall find the right hand too weake to plucke a good conſcience out of its ſtation.

It was a ſore tentation wherwith *Moſes* was aſſaulted. The treaſures, and pleaſures, the honors, & favors of the Ægyptian Court, & Princeſſe. All theſe wooe him not to goe the people of God. Had that people been ſetled and at reſt in Canaan, yet had it beene a great tentation to prefer Ægypt before Canaan. But the people are in Ægypt, in affliction, in bondage, therfore ſo much the more ſtrength in the tentation What will you be ſo mad to leave all for nothing, certaine honours for certaine afflictions? who can tell but you may be raiſed to this greatneſſe to be an inſtrument of good to your people! You by your favour in the Court may bee meanes to eaſe them of their bondage, and ſo you may doe the Church ſervice with your greatneſſe, &c. Here was a tentation on the right hand, and with the right hands ſtrength. Well, and how ſpeeds it? Is *Moſes* able

to

to withſtand it? See *Heb.* 11. 24,25,26. *He refuſed to be called the Son of Pharaohs Daughter, &c.* All would not doe, nor ſtir him a whit. Thoſe faithfull Worthies before mentioned, could not be ſtirred with all the cruelties their adverſaries could invent. I, but it may be a tentation on the right hand, might have made them draw away the right hand of fellowſhip from a good conſcience. Well, their enemies therefore will try what good they can do that wayes, *Heb.* 12.37. *They were tempted*, that is, on the right hand they were ſollicited and inticed, and allured with faire promiſes of honours, favours preferments, as *Bonner* uſed to deale with the Martyrs, hee had ſometimes butter and oyle, as well as fire and faggot, in his mouth. Thus were they tempted, but yet what availed theſe tentations? Iuſt as much as their ſtones, ſawes, ſwords, priſons, all a like. They for all theſe tentations keepe a good conſcience to their dying day, and hold faſt the faith and truth unto the end.

A good conſcience is of the mind of thoſe trees, in *Iothams* parable, *Iudg.* 9. It will not with the Olive loſe its *fatneſſe*, nor with the Fig-tree loſe its *ſweetneſſe*, nor

nor with the vine its *wine* of cheerfulnes, to have the fatteſt, and ſweeteſt preferments and pleaſures of the world, no though it were to raigne over the trees.

It was an excellent reſolution of *Benevolus* in his anſwer to *Iuſtina* the Arrian Empreſſe, profering preferments to him to have beene inſtrumentall in a ſervice which could not be done with a good conſcience. *What doe ye promiſing mee an higher degree of preferment for a reward of impiety? yea even take this from me which already I have, ſo that I may keepe a good conſcience.* And ſo forthwith hee threw at his feet his girdle, the enſigne of his honour. Thus doth a good conſcience throw and trample honour and preferment under foot, to maintaine its owne integritie: Thus can nothing corrupt a good conſcience. *I have beene young, and now am old, and yet never ſaw I the righteous forſaken*, to wit, of God, *Pſalm.* 37. *David* out of his experience could have ſaid as much in this point, I have beene young, and now am old, yet never ſaw I God, and godlineſſe forſaken by the righteous, by the man that had a good conſcience. But the man that had a good conſcience when hee was young,

Benevolo Iuſtina præcepit ut adverſus fidem patrum imperialia decreta dictaret; Illo vero ſe impia verba prolaturum abnuente, celſiorem honoris gradum ſpopondit, ſi mãdata perficeret: cui Benevolus, Quid mihi pro impietatis mercede altiorem promittis gradum? hunc ipſum quem habeo auferte, dum integram fidei conſcientiam tuear. Ac protenus cingulum ante pedes ejus abjecit. *Sigon de occid. Imp. l.* 1. *pag.* 200.

will hold out and have it when he is old. It is the great honour and grace of a good Conſcience, which *Walden* thinks he ſpake to the diſgrace of *Wickliffe*, *Ita ut cano placeret, quod inveni complacebat*, He was young and old, one and the ſame man. Old age decayes the body, the ſtrength, the ſenſes, but conſcience it touches not, that holds out ſound to death. As of Chriſt in another ſenſe. *Heb.* 13. So may it be ſaid of a good conſcience in this, *Yeſterday, and to day, and the ſame for ever.* A good conſcience is no changeling, but let a mans eſtate change from rich to poore, from poore to rich, or let the times change from good to evill, or from evill to worſe; or a mans dayes change from young to old, let his haires and head change, yet among all theſe changes a good cõſcience wil not change, but hold it owne untill its laſt day.

Now put mens conſciences upon this triall, & their inconſtancie either in good cauſes, or courſes, will diſcover their naughtines. In a good cauſe how many are like *Darius*? his cõſciẽce ſtruggles a great while for *Daniel*, he knew he was innocẽt, he knows the action to be unjuſt, and therfore labours all day till the ſetting of the Sun

Sun for his deliverance, *Dan.* 6.14. but yet overcome with the Presidents & Princes urgencie, *ver.* 16. he cõmands him to the Lions den. Here was a natural conscience standing for equity and justice, but yet no good conscience, it holds but till Sun set, and his conscience went downe with the Sun. His cõscience yields & is overcome, though it know the act to be unjust.

Pilats conscience makes him plead for Christ. In his conscience he acquits him, and thrice solemnly professes that hee finds no fault in him, and therefore cannot in conscience condemne him, yea withall seekes to release him, *Iohn* 19.12. Is not here now a good conscience? Indeed it had beene so in this particular fact, if his conscience had beene inflexible, and had held out. But when *Pilate* heares them say, that if he be his friend, he is no friend to *Cæsar*, *Iohn* 19.12. and whileſt withall hee is willing to content the people, *Marke* 15.15. Now that there is feare on the one side, and desire to carry favour on the other, where now is his conscience? Now hee presently delivers him to be crucified, though he knowes in his conscience that there is no fault in him. What a good

conſcience hath many a Iudge, and Lawyer? How ſtiffely will they ſtand in, and proſecute a juſt caſe, till a bribe come and puts out the very eies of their conſcience. Their conſciences are of ſo ſoft a temper, that the leaſt touch of ſilver turnes their edge preſently. They hold out well till there come a tentation on their left hand, that is, in their right hand, *Pſal.* 144. 8. *Whoſe mouth ſpeakes vanity and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.* If once the right hand be a right hand of falſehood, the mouth will ſoone ſpeake vanity, though before it ſpeake conſcience. Who wou'd not have thought *Balaam* to have beene a man of an excellent conſcience? *If Balak would give mee his houſe full of ſilver and gold, I cannot goe beyond the word of the Lord my God, to doe leſſe or more, Num.* 22. 18. But yet beſides that faltering in thoſe words *I cannot goe*, whereas the language of a good conſcience would have beene, *I will not goe*; beſides that I ſay, before hee ends his ſpeech, ſee how the hope of promotions works, and works his conſcience like wax before the fire, *ver.* 19. *Now therfore I pray you tarry heere alſo this night, that I may know what the Lord will ſay unto me more.*

A faltering inference: If his conſcience had beene good, it would have inferred ſtrongly thus; Now therefore I pray get you gone, and trouble me no longer. Hee knew in his conſcience the people ought not to be curſed, and that he ought not to goe, and yet comes in with *I pray tarry all night, &c.* Truly *Balak* needed not to have beene ſo laviſh and ſo prodigall, as to offer an houſe full, one handfull of his ſilver and gold will frame *Balaams* conſcience to any thing.

The like triall may be made of mens conſciences, by their *inconſtancie* in good courſes, and this will condemne three ſorts, as guilty of evill conſciences.

1. Such as ſometimes being convinced of the neceſſity of good courſes, doe ſet upon the practice of them, and begin to looke towards Religion, and religious duties, till meeting with ſome of their ſuppoſed wiſer neighbours, they be adviſed to take heed, they may bring themſelves into greater note then they are aware of, they will incur ſharper cenſures then they thinke of, &c. and ſuddenly all is daſht, all is quaſht and quencht. There is a diſeaſe among beaſts they call the *Staggers*, and it is a diſeaſe

too frequent in mens Conſciences, who ſometimes are on, ſometimes off, one day begin, and next day ceaſe good courſes. That may be ſaid of many mens conſciences, which *Iacob* ſpeakes of *Reuben*, *Gen.* 49. 4. *Vnſtable as water.* The water moues as the winds blow. If the wind blow out of the Eaſt, then it moves one way; if out of the weſt, then it moves another, the cleane contrary, and upon every new winde a new way. So many, let them heare a convincing, and a good perſwading Sermon moving to good duties, then they will ſet upon them; let them againe heare either ſome mocks, or reproches for thoſe wayes, or ſome ſage adviſe from one they count wiſe, againſt the way of conſcience, they are as far off againe as ever. Theſe ſtaggering, irreſolute, and watry Conſciences are farre from good ones.

2. Such as in their youth, or when the world was low with them, were very zealous and forward; But what are they now at this day? True downeright *Demaſes*, zealous when they were young, but now old and cold: zealous when they were in ſome, but now the world is come vpon them, *Demas*-like they have for-

ſaken

ſaken goodnes, and embraced the world, have gotten now worme-eaten, and world-eaten conſciences. The zeale of Gods houſe was wont to eat them up, but now the world hath eaten up them, and all their good conſcience.

3. Thoſe that have made good the prophane Proverb, *Young Saints and old Devills*, whoſe hatred of Religion and good conſcience is greater then ever was their love thereto, as *Ammon* was towards *Thamar*, 2 *Sam.*13.15. They were zealous and forward frequenters of Gods houſe and Ordinances; zealous enemies againſt Swearing, and Sabbath-breaking, &c. But what are they at this day? yeſterday indeed zealous profeſſors of holines, but what are they to day? to day malicious ſcoffers of godlineſſe, haters and oppoſers of goodnes, the only ſwearers and drunkards in a country. What kind of cõſciences are theſe? none of *Pauls* conſcience, *I have lived in all good conſcience untill this day*. What then? juſt the conſciences of *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, 1 *Tim.*1. 18,19. They once made great profeſſion of conſcience, but now enemies to *Paul*, and blaſphemers, men, as *Paul* ſpeaks, that had put *away good conſcience*, they did

not through want of watchfulnesse let it *slip, or steale away*; but as if it would never have been gone soone enough, they *put*, and *drove it away*, ἀπωσάμενοι, *Beza* translates it, *Qua expulsa*. They used their consciences as *Ammon* did *Thamar* after his lust satisfied, 2 *Sam.* 13. 15, 17. *Arise, be gone*, sayes hee to her, and when shee pleads for her selfe, hee cals his servant, and sayes unto him, *Put out this woman, and bolt the doore after her*, put her out so, as shee may be sure not to come againe. They dealt with their Consciences as Colleges deale with Rake-hels, expelled them without all hope of re-entry. Thus many prophane Apostating backsliders cannot be content to lose good conscience, unlesse *Ammon*-like they may put it away with violence, and expell it. And how can they have good conscience that have put it away? Hee hath not his wife, that hath put her away, and given her a bill of divorce. In the dayes of Popery and darknesse, the Devill it seemed walked very familiarly amongst them, and hence we have so many stories of Fayries, and of children taken out of cradles, and others laid in their roomes, whom they called *Changelings*.

Since

Since the light of the Goſpell, theſe Devils and Fayries have not beene ſeene amongſt us, but yet we are ſtill troubled with *Changelings*. Some, Prieſts and Ieſuites have changed; ſome, the world hath changed; ſome, Good-fellowſhip and the Ale-houſe hath changed. Theſe have played the Fayries, have taken and ſtolne away goodly, forward, and fervent Chriſtians, and have layd in their roomes Earthlings, Worldlings, Popelings, Swearers, Drunkards, Malicious ſcorners of all goodneſſe. Thus have theſe Fayries in ſtead of faire and comely children, brought in theſe lame, blind, deformed and wrizzled faced *Changelings*, that any one may eaſily ſee them to be rather the births of ſome Hobgoblins, then the Children of God. If therefore we would evidence our conſciences good, labour to hold to the laſt, and reſt not in youth, but labor to have age found in the way of righteouſneſſe. This is a Crowne of glory, and this is right good conſcience to live therein untill our dying day. All the former ſixe are nothing without this laſt.

CHAP.

Chap. X.

The comfort and benefit of a good conſcience, in the caſe of Diſgrace, and Reproach.

VVEe are now come to the fift and laſt point which was propounded: The *Motives* to perſwade us to get good conſciences. The *Motives* therunto may be many, I will keepe my ſelfe within the compaſſe of five.

1. *Motive to a good conſcience.*

1. *Motive,* The incomparable and unſpeakable comfort, and benefit thereof in ſuch caſes and times as all other comforts faile a man, and wherin a man ſtands moſt in need of comfort. Theſe caſes or times are five.

1. The Time and Caſe of *Diſgrace* and *Reproach.*
2. The Time of *Common feare*, and *Common calamitie.*
3. The Time of *Sicknes*, or outward croſſes in a mans goods.
4. The Time of *Death.*
5. The Time and Day of *Iudgment.*

In all theſe, or in any of theſe times it is good to have ſuch a friend or companion tha:

that will ſticke to a man, and be faithfull to him when all other things faile him. Such a friend, and ſuch a companion, is a good conſcience. *A friend loves at all times, and a brother is borne for adverſitie. Proverb.* 17. 17. But in ſome of theſe caſes a brother and friend may be falſe, and will not, or may be weake and cannot helpe nor pleaſure a man, but a good conſcience is better then all friends and brethren whatſoever; when they will not, or cannot, or may not, yet then will a good conſcience ſticke cloſe to a man, and be a ſure friend to him. Let us ſee in the particulars the truth of it.

Interim elige ſocium qui cum omnia ſubtracta fuerint fidem ſervat dilectoribus ſuis nec recedit in tẽpore anguſtiæ. *Bern. de Conſc.*

1. In the time and caſe of *Diſgrace, Infamie, Reproach*, and wrongs of that kinde, the comfort and benefit of a good conſcience is unſpeakeable. When a man ſhall be traduced, ſlandered, falſely accuſed and condemned, then in ſuch wrongs will a good conſcience doe the office of a faithfull friend, will ſticke to, and ſtand by a man, and will comfort and hearten him againſt all ſuch injuries. *Paul* is heere conuented before the Councell as a Malefactor, hee hath an whole Councell bent againſt him. What now is his comfort, and

The comfort of a good conſcience in caſe of diſgrace and reproach.

and his defence againſt ſuch an heape of accuſers as doe affront him? This it is, *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conſcience.* As if hee had ſaid, Impeach, traduce, accuſe and condemne mee as you pleaſe, yet be it knowne unto you, that I have a good conſcience, and this my good conſcience is it which ſhall comfort and uphold me againſt all your injurious and unequall proceedings. You may bring forth falſe witneſſes againſt me, but my conſcience doth, and will witneſſe for me, you may condemne me, yet my conſcience acquits, and abſolves me. And thus doth *Paul* ſhelter himſelfe under his good conſcience.

The like we may ſee in the next Chapter. *Ananias* and the Elders come and bring *Tertullus*, and he is feed to be *Pauls* accuſer, and he layes heavie and hainous things to *Pauls* charge, *verſ.* 5. *Wee have found this man a peſtilent fellow, and a mover of ſ dition among all the Iews throughout the world, a ring-leader of the ſect of the Nazarens, &c.* Here be foule things, what will *Paul* be able to ſay to all this? Will not this bee enough to ſinke him downe utterly, to ſee ſo many banded together, and ſuch great ones combined

to

to countenance ſuch an accuſation? How will he be able to ſubſiſt? Now then behold the benefit, and comfort of a good conſcience. He holds up his former buckler, and ſmites *Ananias*, and the reſt with his former weapon, *verſ.* 16. *Herein doe I exerciſe my ſelfe, to have alwaies a conſcience voyd of offence towards God, and towards men.* *Ananias* and the Elders have a mercenary *Tertullus* to accuſe him, *Paul* hath no man dares be ſeene to plead for him, none will be retained in his cauſe, but yet now conſcience ſteps out, and ſtops the foule mouth of this ſlanderous Oratour, and puts ſpirit, and heart into *Paul* to plead his own Cauſe againſt them all. Conſcience ſeemes on this manner to animate him; Feare not *Paul* the accuſations of this *Tertullus*, I witneſſe for thee thine Innocencie. I juſtifie it to the teeth of *Tertullus*, that he is one whoſe malice and covetouſneſſe hath made him ſet his conſcience to ſale; ſtand up therefore, and ſpeake boldly for thy ſelfe, dread them not. Well fare a good conſcience yet, that will ſpeake comfort to *Paul*, and make *Paul* ſpeake with courage, when none elſe dare be ſeene in his cauſe.

It was an ill caſe *David* was in, *Pſalm.* 69. 20,

69. 20. 21. *Reproach hath broken mine heart, and I am full of heavineſſe, and I looked for ſome to take pitty, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none: they gave me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave mee vineger to drinke.* A very hard caſe indeed. Where was now *Davids* familiar friend, his acquaintance with whom hee was wont to take ſweet counſell, what was become of him now? Poſſibly ſome of his acquaintance were at this time like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joynt, *Prov.* 25. 19. *Confidence in an unfaithfull man is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joynt* Others it may be that had profeſt him loue, were ready to faſten a poyſoned tooth in him. This was *Davids* caſe, and this may be any mans caſe; but now at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a pinch appeares the excellency and benefit of a good Conſcience. Though all a mans friends, ſhould prove *Iobs* friends, like the Winter brooks of *Teman*, that in winter overſwell the bankes, but in the ſcorching heat of Sommer prove drie ditches, yet then, even then well fare a good conſcience. That will heale *Davids* heart broken with reproach, that will cheere him

him up in his heavineſſe, that will ſweeten the gall, and take away the ſharpenes of the vineger, which his enemies have given him to drinke.

There is a generation, Prov. 30. 14. *whoſe teeth are as ſwords, and their j w teeth as knives*; and *Pro.* 12. 18. that generation *ſpeakes as the piercing of a ſword.* There is a generation, whoſe *words are woũds that go down into the innermoſt parts of the belly.* Pro. 18. 8. Theſe be dangerous generations. But what generation are they? *Generations of vipers.* Pſal. 140. 3. *Adders poyſon is under their lips. Iunius* tranſlates it, *Venenum ptyados*, The poiſon of the *ſpitting Serpent.* They be then generations of ſpitting ſerpents, even of fiery ſerpents, that have their tongues ſet on fire from hell, and ſo they ſpit fiery poyſon in the faces of Innocents. Now there is no man can live in this world, at whom theſe adders will not ſpit, no man can be free from the ſprinckling of their poyſon. The diſciple is not above the maſter; If theſe ſnakes have hiſſed at the Lord of the houſe; and if theſe ſpitting Serpents have caſt their poiſon in his face, why would they feare to do it to the ſervants? But is there then no balme againſt

gainſt this poyſon? No buckler againſt theſe ſwords? Yes, there is the ſoveraigne balme, and the impenetrable buckler of a good conſcience. It is a balſome that will allay the poyſon of theſe Adders, that it ſhall never burſt a mans heart, or if theſe ſwords pierce the very innermoſt bowels, yet this will ſo ſalve theſe wounds, that they ſhall not ranckle, nor become mortall? Oh! how mortall is this adders poyſon, how fatall are theſe ſwords, how keene their edge, and how full of paine their wounds, where inward guilt gives ſtrength unto them? But integrity and goodneſſe of conſcience, is a precious balme of *Gilead*, that takes away the venome of this poyſon, & the ſtinging ſmart of the wounds of theſe ſwords.

Let *Paul* live with ever ſo good a conſcience before God, and man, *Act.* 24. 16. yet *Tertullus* will play the ſpitting adder, and hee will ſpit, yea, ſpue forth his poyſon in his face, and in the face of an whole Court will not ſpare openly to ſlander him for an arrant varlet, a lewd, peſtilent, and a villanous fellow. Such drivel will the malicious world ſpit in the face of Godlineſſe. But mark now the benefit, and comfort of a good conſcience.

Either

Either a good conſcience with *Stephens* Angelicall face will dazle, and ſhame the devils Oratours, 1 *Pet.* 3.16. *Having a good conſcience that they may be aſhamed*, or elſe like *Paul* it can ſhake off thoſe vipers without ſwelling or falling downe dead. Yea, if Satans orators, will needs be opening their mouthes againſt *Paul*; yet ſo good is his conſcience, that as *Iohn Hus* appealed from Pope *Alexander* to Pope *Alexander*, namely, from him in his anger to him in his cold blood, and better adviſed, ſo dares *Paul* appeale from *Tertullus* to *Tertullus*, *David* from *Shimei* to *Shimei*, from enemies to enemies, from their tongues to their hearts, from their mouthes to their Conſciences, as knowing their owne integritie to bee ſuch, as that their enemies owne hearts give their tongues the ly, and tels them that againſt their Conſcienſes poſſeſſed with meere malice they are hurried on in Satans ſervice. *Tertullus* knowes he lyes, and his owne Conſcience tells him hee lyes in his throate, that *Paul* is an honeſter man that himſelfe, yea, and the comfort is, that *Pauls* Conſcience comforts him, and aſſures him that *Tertullus* his Conſcience aſſures him all this,

So unspeakably sweet is the comfort of a good conscience.

David complaines of a great affliction, *Psal.* 35. 11. *False witnesse did rise up, they layd to my charge things that I knew not.* What should a man do in such a case, if he had not the comfort of a good conscience witnessing for him? But now at such a pinch appeares the benefit of a good conscience; Let ever so many rise up falsly to witnesse against him, yet his conscience will witnesse as fast for him. *My friends scorne mee,* sayes *Iob, Iob* 16. 20. They witnessed against him to be a wicked person, and an hypocrite, they censured and condemned him, but what was *Iobs* comfort? That same, *vers.* 19. *Behold my witnesse is in heaven, and my record is on high.* That was one comfort, but that was not all, hee had also a witnesse on earth, and his record below. Vpon whose record, and witnesse, see with what solemnitie and with what confidence he stands, *Iob* 27. 2, 6. *As God liveth who hath taken away my judgement, and the Almighty who hath vexed my soule, All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrills, my lips shall not speake wickednesse, nor my tongue*

utter

utter deceit; God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you, till I dye I will not remove mine integrity from me, my righteouſneſſe I will hold faſt, and will not let it goe, mine heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live. As if he had ſaid, As the Lord lives, whilſt there is breath in my bodie, I will not yield unto your accuſations, nor yet acknowledge my ſelfe guilty of that you doe charge mee withall. Vrge mee and preſſe me what you will, yet I will never let goe mine hold. Why what is it that makes *Iob* thus ſtiffe, and reſolute, what is it that ſupports him with ſuch an excellent ſpirit? that *ver. 6. Mine heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.* Indeed you reproach, cenſure, and condemne mee, you lay heavie things to my charge; But I have ſearched the records of my conſcience, I have called that unpartiall witneſſe to teſtifie the truth, and I find conſcience witneſſing ſtrongly on my ſide, and therefore do what you can, you ſhall never beare mee downe. *Iobs* friends may prove fickle, and falſe, but his own conſcience will prove true to him, that will plead for him, animate him, and comfort him againſt all their calumnious and injurious reproches, and give him

Nam ſi in his in quibus me criminantur, teſtimonium Conſcientiæ meæ non ſtat contra me in conſpectu Dei, quo nullus oculus mortalis intenditur, non ſolum contriſtari non debeo, verumetiam exultare & gaudere; quia merces mea multa eſt in cœlis. Neq; enim intuendum eſt quam ſit amarum, ſed quam falſum ſit quod audio, & quã verax pro cujusnomine hoc audio. *Aug. contra. lit. Petil. l. 3.*

cauſe of much joy and triumph. *Iob* then had his witneſſe in heaven, and *Iob* had his witneſſe on earth, God and his owne conſcience, two witneſſes beyond all exception; and in the *mouth of two witneſſes every truth ſhall ſtand.* Conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes, and God is above conſcience. And what Conſciences witneſſe concerning matter of fact, God himſelfe will juſtifie the ſame. He that hath a good conſcience, hath a ſure friend, that will never ſlinke nor ſhrinke at any hand. Nay he hath two good friends, and two ſubſtantiall witneſſes, whoſe teſtimonies, though ſecret, yet are ſuch as ſweetly ſolace the heart of man againſt open reproaches, ſlanders, falſe witneſſes, and all wrongs and injuries of that kinde whatſoever. The teſtimony of conſcience is full of comfort, becauſe of the vndoubted certaintie, and the vnqueſtioned infallibility thereof, ſo that it voycing on a mans ſide, ſtrangely cheares his heart, *Pro.27.19. As in water face anſwers to face, ſo doth the heart of a man unto man*; That is, as ſome expound it, As a man may ſee his face by looking in the water, ſo a man may ſee himſelfe and what hee is by looking into his

his conſcience. If a man ſhould be told that hee had ſome filth or bloach on his face, if he would goe looke into the water, or ſpecially into a looking-glaſſe, hee ſhould eaſily ſee whether it were ſo or no. And if looking into the water, or glaſſe, hee could not ſee any ſuch filth in his face, though an hundred ſhould offer to beare him downe to the contrary, yet would hee beleeve his owne eyes before them all. So here when at any time foule mouths are open, and ſpare not to caſt aſperſions upon innocency, and to lay ſcandalous things to a mans charge, then aman by looking into his conſcience can ſee himſelf, and can find whether he be guilty or not, and ſeeing himſelfe in that water, or in that glaſſe to be cleare from that dirt and filth which malice would caſt in his face, it ſo fils his heart with comfort, and confidence, as makes him treade all reproach, and falſe judgement of man vnder his foot.

In ſpeculo Conſcientiæ ſtatus interioris hominis & exterioris cognoſcitur. Non immerito Conſcientiam ſpeculo comparavit, quoniam in ea tanquam ſpeculo rationis oculus tam indecens quam quod decens in ſe eſt, claro aſpectu appetere poteſt. *Bern. de Conſc.*

This appeares by the contrary. Let a man bee praiſed, and magnified ever ſo, let ever ſo much good be ſpoken of him, and ever ſo much worth be attributed to him, yet if his owne heart tell him, that all is falſely ſpoken of him, and

there is indeed no ſuch matter in him, he hath at all no true comfort in all the good words of the world, *Prov.* 27.21. *As the fining pot for ſilver, the furnace for gold, ſo is a man to his praiſe*, that is, a man is to try his praiſe that is given him, and if his conſcience tell him it is undeſerved, hee is to ſeparate this droſſe of flattery from himſelfe. All the commendations, and admirations of the world what comfort can they yield, whileſt a mans conſcience tels him, that they are all but lying and glavering flatteries: what though the poore multitude feeling the ſwette, and refreſhment of a Phariſees almes, doe canonize a Phariſe for a Saint, yet what is he the better, or what comfort hath hee the more, whileſt his owne conſcience reproaches, and reproves him, and tells him that hee is a vain-glorious hypocrite, and that though theſe whom hee feeds, ſend him to heaven, yet hee ſhall have his portion with hypocrites, and unbelievers. What is a man the better for a flattering Funerall commendation, whilſt in the meane time he is under the reproach, and torture of his conſcience, in the place of torment? How many a man is there that hath the good word

Non ideo bona eſt cõſcientia mea quia vos illam laudatis Quid enim laudatis quod non videtis? *Aug. de ver. dom. ſer.* 49. Si autem nõ aurẽ ſolam percutit iracundia criminantis, verumetiam cõſcientiam mordet veritas criminis, quid mihi prodeſt ſi me cõtinuis laudibus totus mundus attollat. Ita nec malam cõſcientiam ſanat præconium laudãtis, nec bonam vulnerat conviciantis opprobrium. *Aug. contra. lit. peſil. l.* 2. In omni quod dicitur ſemper tacitè occurrere debemus ad mentem & interiorem teſtem, & judicem requirere. Quid enim prodeſt ſi omnes lau-

word of all men, no man ſpeakes well of him, but yet in the meane time, his owne heart gives him bitter words, and rates him to his face? How well contented would ſuch a one be, and what an happy exchange would he hold it, to have all the world raile on him, and ſlander him, ſo his own conſcience would but ſpeake friendly and kindly to him? ſo he could find hony from his conſcience, he would not care what gall he had from the world.

Experience lets us ſee that ſuch as have beene malevolent and injurious againſt others innocencie, though they have been abetted and borne out by their umpires, and advocates, that for handfulls of barley, and ſcraps, and cruſts, have laboured to maintaine ill Cauſes, and worſe perſons, yet they have had no peace nor reſt of heart. Their advocates have bid them, ſit downe with reſt and victory, the day is theirs, they have cheered them, and ſtriven to deſerve their fee, and yet their guilty Clients being netled with the inward guilt of their conſciences, have ſtill beene haunted with a reſtleſſe and perplexed unquiet ſpirit, which others made guilty, and cenſured for offenders by ſuch mercenarie umpires, have

dant & conſcientia acculat? aut poterit obeſſe ſi omnes derogent, & ſola conſcientia defendit? *Greg. ſup. 125. hom. 6.*

poſſeſſed their ſoules in patience, and have been cheerfull and merry-hearted, from the comfort of their owne innocent and cleare conſciences.

So that looke as the naughty conſcience can ſpeake no comfort, though all the world ſpeake well of it; ſo contrarily, though all the world reproach, cenſure, ſlander, &c. yet a good conſcience can, and will ſpeake peace, and comfort to a mans heart.

The *Corinthians* did exceedingly ſlight *Paul*, Hee was this, and hee was that, but how was he affected with it? See how, 1 *Cor.*4.3,4. *But with me it is a very ſmall thing, that I ſhould be judged of you.* I know full well what your cenſures are, and what ſentence you paſſe upon me, but know ye that I no whit at all regard the ſame, I make no reckoning thereof at all. Why? might the *Corinthians* ſay, do ye count us ſo ſilly, and ſo injudicious? Nay, ſayes *Paul*, I ſpeake it not as if you were ſillier than others, with me it is a ſmall thing to bee judged of you, or of mans judgement, let them be the moſt wiſe, and judicious that are in the world, or of *mans Day*, though by men convened in ſolemne manner for judgement; I paſſe not

Fœlix conſcientia non ſibi in aliquo conſcia, quæ non propriùm judicium nec alienum veretur. *Bern. de Conſe.* Beata plane quæ non alienis æſtimatur judiciis, ſed domeſticis percipitur ſenſibus tanquam ſui iudex. Neq; enim populariſ opiniones pro mercede aliqua requirit, neque pro ſupplicio pavet. *Ambroſ. de offic. l.2.c.1.* Non poſſunt aliena verba crimen affigere quod propria non recepit conſcientia. *Ambroſ. in Pſal.* 38.

not what their cenſure is, I regard not their miſ-judgings of mee. I, but what makes *Paul* thus ſlight mens judgement of him? That in the fourth verſe, *I know nothing by my ſelfe*, mine owne conſcience judges me not, nor ſentences mee, that layes no ſuch thing to my charge, and therefore ſo long as my conſcience is on my ſide, I regard not a whit what the world judges.

Now then ſee what a Motive this is to get and keepe a good conſcience. As we would be glad to have comfort and confidence againſt the malice of opprobrious tongues, as wee would have a counterpoiſon againſt their venome, ſo get a good conſcience. Here is that which may make us in love with a good conſcience. Reproach muſt full often be the portion of Gods deare children. *Iſraelites* ſhall be for ever an abomination to *Ægyptians*. And though the *Ægyptian* dogges moved not their tongues againſt *Iſrael*, *Exodus* 11. 7. yet dogged *Ægyptians* will move their tongues and their teeth too. The Apoſtles muſt be counted the *filth of the world, and the offſcowrings of all things*, 1 *Corinth.* 4. 13. The Lord Ieſus himſelfe dranke of this cup,

cup, *Psal.* 22. 6, 7. *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me, laugh me to scorne, &c.* The way to heaven is a narrow way, and this narrow way is beset with snakes, spitting adders, barking, and biting, and mad dogs, and a man must passe to heaven *through good and evill report*, 2 *Corrinth.* 6. 8.

Currentem attrites super aspidas & basiliscos declinare serpentem viperam non poterit. *Prosp. de Aug.*

Conscia mens recti fama mendacia ridet, Sed nos in vitium credula turba sumus. *Ovid.*

Well then, it being so hard a passage how may a man get himselfe so armed that he may passe cheerfully through all these? get a good conscience, and thou shalt regard these snakes, serpents, vipers, and dogs, no more than a straw under thy foot. If thou have a good conscience, thou shalt *laugh* at the reproaches of enemies, as *Eliphaz* speakes of destruction. *Iob* 5. A good conscience will say unto thee, Go on cheerily in the wayes of God, what ever discouragements the Devill raises by reproaches and slanders, feare them not, behold I acquit & excuse thee, I will beare thee out, I will witnesse at Gods tribunall for thee. Lo, I give thee balme against their poyson, a buckler against their swords. Let them curse, yet I will blesse thee; let them reproach, yet I will comfort; let them condemne,

yet

yet I will abſolve thee; let them defame thee, yet I will be thy compurgator; let them caſt dirt in thy face, yet I wil waſh it off; let them diſquiet, yet behold, I am ready to cheere thee. Oh the ſweet and unconceivable comfort that a good conſcience wil ſpeak, even in the middſt of *the cruell ſpeakings of ungodly men, Iude* 15. that will ſpeake comfortably when they ſpeake cruelly, and moſt comfortably, when they ſpeak moſt cruelly. Suchis the benefit of a good conſcience in caſe of reproach and diſgrace.

Chap. XI.

The comfort and benefit of a good conſcience in the times of common feares and calamities, in the times of perſonall evils, as ſickneſſe, and afflictions, for conſcience ſake.

2. *The comfort of a good conſcience in the times of common feares and calamities.*

IN the ſecond place, let us ſee what the benefit and comfort of a good conſcience is, in the times of *Common feares*, and *Common calamities*. When the world is full of feares and dangers, and calamities breake in, how fares it then with an evill conſcience, in what taking are

are they that want a good conſcience? They are abſorpt with feares, and the very tydings puts them to ſuch perplexities, *Iſa.*7.2. *Ahas* is told of a confederacie betweene *Syria*, and *Ephraim*, and ſee in what feares hee and his people were, *His heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.* So deeply doe reports and and evill tidings affect them, the trees in the wood are not ſo ſhaken with the bluſtering windes, as evill conſciences are with evill tydings. When ill newes, and ill conſciences meet, there is no ſmall feare. The ſignes that prognoſticate ſorrowfull times, ſee how deeply they affect evill conſciences, *Luke* 21.25. *There ſhall be ſignes in the Sun and the Moone, and in the ſtars, and upon the earth,* diſtreſſe *of Nations with* perplexity, *mens hearts* failing *them* for feare, *and for looking after thoſe things which are* comming *in the earth.* But when calamitie indeed comes, and not ill newes, but ill times, and ill conſciences meet, how are they then? They are then either in the caſe the Ægyptians were in the famine, *Gen.* 47.13. *They were at their wits end*; or as thoſe in a ſtorme at Sea, *Pſ.* 107.26, 27. *Their*

ſoule

ſoule is melted becauſe of trouble, They reele to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and all their wiſedome is ſwallowed vp. Exceſſe of feare puts them into as great diſtempers, as exceſſe of wine, it vtterly ſtupifies them, and they by feare, are as much bereft of the vſe of their ſenſes, wit, and wiſedome, as a drunkard is in his drunkeneſſe. Yea, their feares make them not onely drunke, but ſtarke madde, *Deut.* 28. 34. *Thou ſhalt be oppreſſed and curſed alway, ſo that thou ſhalt bee madde for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* The perplexities of an evill conſcience in evill times, are vnſpeakeably grievous. *Iſay* doth exceeding lively deſcribe them, *Iſay* 31. 7, 8, 9. *Therefore ſhall all hands be faint, and every mans heart ſhall melt, And they ſhall be afraid, pangs and ſorrowes ſhall take hold of them, they ſhall be in paine as a woman that travells, they ſhall be amazed one at another, their faces ſhall bee as flames, &c.* Hence that ſame ſtrange queſtion of the Prophet, *Ierem.* 30. 6, *Aske ye now, and ſee whether a man doth travell with childe?* A ſtrange queſtion, what ſhould make the Prophet aske it? Becauſe he foreſaw ſuch ſtrange behaviour amongſt them, carrying

carrying themſelves in the ſame faſhion in the day of calamitie, that women vſe to doe in the extremity of the pangs of childbirth. *Wherefore doe I ſee every man with his hands on his loynes as a woman in travell, and all-faces are turned into palenesſe? Alas, for that day is great, ſo that none is like it, it is even the time of Iacobs trouble.* When ſuch wofull dayes befall a man, all his riches will not yeeld him a jot of comfort, *Pro.* 11. 4. *Riches availe not in the day of wrath.* No, that will no whit cheere a man at ſuch a time, *They ſhall caſt their ſilver in the ſtreets, and their gold ſhall be removed, &c. Ezek.* 7. 19. This ſhall be the miſerable pickle a man ſhall bee in at ſuch a time, that wants a good Conſcience.

But now looke upon a man with a good conſcience in ſuch times, and how fares it with him? Let evill tydings and times come, how is he affected therewithall? *He will not be afraid of evill tydings, for his heart is fixed, Pſalme.* 112. 7. Feare he may, but yet his Heart ſhall be free from thoſe reſtleſſe, and perplexing diſtractions, wherewith all others are vexed, *Luke* 22. 9. *When ye ſhall heare of warres and commotions, be not terrified.*

And

And *Prov.* 3. 25. *Be not afraid of ſudden feare.* There is nothing ſo armes and reſolves the heart againſt feares and evill tydings, as doth the peace and integrity of a good conſcience. For let there bee outward peace abroad in the world, and freedome from all feares of warres and combuſtions, yet little joy and comfort can a man have therein, whileſt his conſcience proclames warre againſt him, and as Gods Herald ſummons him to battell. Thoſe inward warres, and rumours of warres, wofully diſtract him in the midſt of his outward peace. So contrarily let there be peace within in the conſcience, and all warres, and feares of warres huſht there, and then what ever feares and troubles are like to be without, yet there will bee a calme, a ſerenity, and a ſweet ſecurity within.

Bee carefull, and ſo fearefull, *for nothing*, *Phil.* 4. 6. To bee fearefull in nothing, is indeed an excellent happineſſe of a well compoſed minde. How might one attaine thereto? How might a man bring his heart to that fixed and ſtabliſht temper? See *verſ.* 7. *The Peace of God that paſſes all underſtanding ſhall* guard *your hearts and mindes*, φρουρησει, ſhall keepe

with

with a guard, as Kings have their guards about them, to ſave their perſons from violence; ſhall guard your *hearts*, that is, your affections, that they run not into extremities of impatience, diſtraction, deſparation; when feares and terrours ſhall come, yee ſhall not be tranſported with ſuch diſtracting thoughts as ſhall deprive you of the freedom of your minds, but that you ſhall have them to attend upon God in the greateſt of your dangers. So that a man with a good conſcience in the middſt of all feares and combuſtions can ſing with *David*, *Pſal.*116.7. *Returne unto thy reſt, O my ſoule.* The peace of a good conſcience is like the ballaſt of a Ship. Let a Ship goe to Sea without ballaſt in the bottome, and every blaſt of wind is ready to overturne it, but being wel ballaſted, though the winds blow ſtrong, yet it ſayles ſteddily and ſafely. Every blaſt of ill newes, and tidings of feare, how full of terrible apprehenſions it fils an ill conſcience, it miſerably unſettles and diſtracts it, whilſt a good conſcience, what blaſts ſoever blow, hath its heart ſteddy and at good command.

Mee thinkes when I conſider *Noah* in his Cabbine, or neſt in the Arke, with what

what ſecurity and quiet of heart hee ſits there, notwithſtanding the clattering of the raines upon the Arke, the roaring of the waters, and the hideous howling and out-cryes of thoſe that were drown'd in the flood, I ſee the Embleme of a good conſcience. *Tubalcain,-Lamech,Iabal,Iubal*, with what horrid perplexities are their ſoules diſtraught. Some climbe up this houſe top, ſome this high tree, others flee to ſome high mountaine, and there in what horror and amazement are they, whilſt one ſees his Children ſprawling, another his wife ſtrugling for life upon the face of the mercileſſe waters, but eſpecially whilſt they behold the waters riſing by little and little, and purſuing them to the houſe tops, and threatning to ſweepe them off from the heads of the Mountaines, to which they had betaken themſelves. Theſe feares and amazements were worſe then an hundreth deathes. But now all this while how is it with *Noah*, hee ſits dry in his cabbin, and litterally was the ſaying of the Pſalme verified of him, *Surely in the floods of great waters they came not nigh unto him, Pſ.32.6.* He hath his Ark *pitcht within*, and *pitcht without*, neither

can the raines from above beat in, nor the waters from beneath leake in, let all *fountaines of the great deepe be broken up, and the flood-gates of heaven be opened,* yet not one drop of water comes at him, and though the waters prevayle fifteene Cubits above the high hils and mountaines, ſo that they bee covered, yet *Noah* hee is out of all feare, let them riſe as high as they will, yet ſhall hee keepe above them ſtill. Iuſt ſuch is the condition, and happineſſe of a man with a good conſcience in ſad times. Whileſt the high hils, and mountaines are covered, the great and brave ſpirits of the world are overwhelmed with feare, are poſſeſt with dreadfull apprehenſions, ſo as they know not which way to looke, nor which way to take, even then a man with a good conſcience hath a ſtrange quiet of heart, is full of ſweet ſecurity and reſolution, and amids all the ſhrikes, howlings, and wringing of hands of earthly men, by patience poſſeſſes his ſoule, is maſter of himſelfe, and compoſes his ſoule to reſt. His Arke is pitcht within and without. The peace of God, and the peace of a good conſcience, keepes the water-floods from comming into

into his ſoule. The raine and the waves they beat upon the Arke, but yet they pierced it not. A man with a good conſcience may fall into, and may be ſwept away with common calamites: yet however it fare with his outward man, yet his ſoule is free from that horrour, and thoſe madding perplexities wherewithall wicked ones are overtaken. The peace of a good conſcience ſhall keepe off theſe diſtracting feares from his mind. Though he cannot be free happily from the *common deſtructions*, yet ſhall be free from the *common diſtractions* of the world. There be two things in common calamities, *The ſword without, and terror within*, *Deut.* 32. 25. and the latter of the two, is the worſe by far. Now here is the benefit of a good conſcience, though it doth not ſave alwaies from the *ſword without*, yet it delivers alwaies from the *terror within*, which gives a terrible edge to the ſword, and which being removed, the ſword is nothing ſo terrible. When the Canaanites were deſtroyed by Iſrael, there was a double ſorrow and ſmart upon them. The ſword of the Iſraelite, and Gods *Hornet*, *Ioſh.* 24. 12. What was that *Hornet?* Nothing elſe but that diſtra-

cting and perplexing feare and terrour wherewith God filled their hearts, as appeares, *Exod.* 23.27,28. There is no *Hornet* can ſo vex with his ſting, as theſe terrors vex evill conſciences in evill dayes. Now here is the priviledge of good conſciences, though they may ſmart with the ſword, yet the *Hornet* ſhal not ſting them, nor fill their hearts with that throbbing anguiſh, that theſe terrors in times of calamitie put evill conſciences to.

A ſweet motive to make any in love with a good conſcience. Whileſt we look upon the evills of the times, wee cannot but looke for euill times. Looke we upon our ſinnes, and Gods adminiſtration abroad; upon the malice and policies of the adverſaries of Gods grace, and what doe theſe but prognoſticate heavy things. Now ſuppoſe a flood ſhould come, would we not be glad of an arke, and ſuch a cabbin therein, as ſhould keepe out the waters from our ſoules? Get then the pitch of a good Conſcience, and thou ſhalt ſit like *Noah*, if not free from the waters, yet free from the feares of *Lamech*, and *Tubal-cain*, which are worſe than the waters. For the feares of ſuch evills are more bitter and inſufferable than the evils

vils themſelves. Suppoſe, I ſay, a flood ſhould come, who would not give a kingdome for an Arke well pitcht? Suppoſe calamitie ſhould come, who would not give a world for a good Conſcience then? *Iabel, Gen.*4.20. he is buſie in building of tents, and he is among his flockes and cattell; and *Iubal, Geneſ.*4.21. hee is wholly upon his merry pins, as his Harpe and Organs; He and his take *the Timbrel and the Harpe, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ, Iob* 21.12. And theſe jolly joviall lads give poore *Noah* many a drie flout, many a ſcornfull ſcoffe, whileſt hee is building his Arke, and aske what this brainſicke & mad fellow meanes to make ſuch a veſſell, whether he meant to ſayle on the dry land, or to make a ſea when he had made his ſhip? I, but when the flood is come, and the waters begin to bee chin deepe, then aske *Iabel* whether building of tents, or building of an Arke bee the wiſer worke? then whether is better *Noahs* Arke, or *Iubals* Pipes? Now th at the flood is come, & theſe come perhaps wading middle deep to the Arke ſide, and bellow and howle to *Noah* to open the arke to them: Now would not *Iabel* give all his tents, and all his cattell, but to bee

where *Noahs* dog lyes? would not *Iubal* now give all his pipes and merriment, to have but the place that an hogge had in the Arke. Now *Iubal*, let us heare one of your merry ſongs, pipe now and make your ſelves merry with gybing at *Noahs* folly, in making a ſhip to ſaile on dry land. What aileſt thou *Iubal* to howle & wring thine hands thus? where is thine Harpe & Organs now? cheere up thy ſoule now with theſe vanities. Now the Flood is come, now *Noah* is in the Arke, now Sirs, you that are ſuch *men of renowne, Gen.6.* 4. you that were the brave gallants of the earth, now tell me who is the foole, and who is the wiſe man now?

How many in the dayes of peace make light of a good Conſcience; yea if they ſee others to be but carefull in rigging of their Ship, and pitching, and trimming up ſuch an Arke, how ready are they to ſpend their byting ſcoffes, and their tart jeſts upon them, but if ever times of trouble & calamitie, and a fire flood of Gods wrath, *Nah.*1 6,8. ſhould breake in, then would a good Conſcience hold up the head with much comfort, and reſolution, whileſt thoſe that formerly made a jeaſt of a good conſcience, ſhould have aking.

and

and quaking hearts, by reaſon of thoſe unmeaſurable feares that ſhall ſeize upon them. A good conſcience will make a man muſick; when *Iubal* ſhalbe glad not only to put up, but with indignation and anguiſh of heart to throw away and curſe his pipes. Well fare a good conſcience in evill dayes. Pitch and trim up this Ark, there is no ſuch proviſion againſt evill dayes, as is a good conſcience. It will do a man ſervice, and ſupport him, when all the brave ſpirits of the earth ſhalbe blank, and at their wits end.

3. The comfort of a good conſcience in time of Sickneſſe.

In the third place, the benefit and comfort of a good conſcience, is conſpicuous in the time of ſickneſſe, or a mans private and perſonall croſſes in his eſtate, &c. A ſicke man with an hayle conſcience, is a cheary and a comfortable man, *Prov.* 13. 14. *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtaine his infirmity*; that is, the ſpirit it ſelfe being hayle, and ſound, it wil enable him to bear any bodily ſickneſſe. *But a wounded ſpirit who can beare*; yea a wounded or a ſicke body, who can comfortably beare, if the ſpirit or conſcience be ſicke? But let the conſcience bee good and ſound, and it helpes a man with great eaſe and comfort, to beare the ſickneſſe of the body. It

is a ſhrewd burthen to beare two ſickneſſes at once, to have a ſicke body, and a ſicke conſcience. A man ſhall find enough of the eaſieſt of them ſingle and alone. But yet an hayle conſcience in an infirme body, ſweetly helpes our infirmitie. Let a man have ever ſo hayle and heathfull a body, yet if the conſcience be naught, and withall awakened, fals to galling and griping, he ſhall find but little joy in his bodily health; ſo contrarily, let a mans conſcience be good; and though his body be ſicke and weake, yet it is a great deale of ſweet refreſhment that it ſhall receive from the conſcience.

Sickneſſe in it ſelfe is exceeding uncomfortable, and in the time of ſickneſſe commonly all bodily comforts, the comforts of meates, drinkes and ſleepe, faile; yea but then here is the benefit of a good conſcience, that will not then fayle, but as it is ſaid, *Eccl.* 10.9. *Money anſwers all things,* ſo a good conſcience anſwers all things, the comfort of it ſupplies the wants of all other comforts. When in ſicknēſſe the comfort of meat, drink, and ſleepe is gone, they are all found againe in the comfort of a good conſcience; that will be meat, and drinke, that will be reſt and

and ſleep, that will make a mans ſick-bed ſoft, and eaſie, that ſhall be as the Angels were to Chriſt in his hunger in the Wilderneſſe, *they miniſtred unto him*, and ſo will a good conſcience miniſter comfort in the want of all other comforts, ſo that a man may ſay of a good conſcience, as we uſe to ſay of ſome ſolid, ſubſtantiall diſh, that there are Partridge, Pheſants and Quailes in it; ſo though outward comforts ceaſe their office, and their worke be ſuſpended, yet a good conſcience comes in its roome, and in it are meat, drinke, ſleepe, eaſe, refreſhment, and what not? A good conſcience is an Electuary, or a Cordiall that hath all theſe ingredients in it. There is no ſuch Cordiall to a ſicke man, as the cordiall of a good conſcience. All Phyſicians to this Phyſician are but ſuch Phyſicians as *Iobs* friends, *Iob* 13.4. *Yea are Phyſicians of no value.* A motive of great weight to make men in love with a good conſcience. Who can be free from ſickneſſe, and how tedious and wearieſome a time is the time of ſickneſſe? Now who would not make much of a Cordiall that might cheare him then, of a receipt that might feed him then? As then we would

be

bee glad of a chearfull and comfortable ſpirit upon our ſicke beds, ſo make much of a good conſcience. Whence is it that moſt men in their ſickneſſes have ſuch drooping ſpirits, lye groaning altogether under their bodily paines, or lye ſottiſhly and ſenſleſly, no ſenſe of any thing but paine and ſickneſſe? Meerely from the want of a good conſcience, they have laid up no Cordial, no comfortable Electuary for themſelves in their health time againſt the day of ſickneſſe. Indeed you ſhall have the miſerable comforters of the world on this manner cheering them; why, how now man, where is your heart? Plucke up a good heart man, never feare for a little ſicknes, &c. True indeed, they ſhould not need to feare, if they could plucke up a good heart. But they that will plucke it up when they are ſicke, muſt lay it up when they are well. Hee that hath a good conſcience to get when he lyes upon his ſicke bed, is like a man that hath his *Aqua-vitæ* to buy when hee is fallen into a ſwoune; A wiſe man that feares ſwouning, would have his hot-water-bottle hanging alwayes ready at his beds-head. But as in other croſſes by ſickneſſe and the like, ſo is the comfort of a

of a good conſcience, never more ſweet, then when a man is under the croſſe for conſcience ſake, and ſuffers affliction and vexation to keepe a good conſcience. Then above all other times will conſcience doe the office of a Comforter, and will ſtand to him that will ſtand for it. When *Nebuchadnezzar* heates his Furnace ſeaven times hotter than at other times, then a good conſcience will ſpeak comfort ſeven times ſweeter than at other times.

Are Gods Saints for good conſcience ſake in priſon? Good conſcience will make their priſons delectable hort-yards. So doth *Algerius* an Italian Martyr date a comfortable Epiſtle of his, *From the delectable hortyard of the Leonine priſon*, a priſon in Venice ſo called. So that as he ſaid, that hee had rather be in priſon with *Cato*, than with *Cæſar* in the Senate houſe, ſo in this regard it was more comfortable to be with *Philpot* in the Cole-houſe, than with *Bonner* in his Palace. *Bonners* conſcience made his Palace a Cole houſe, and a Dungeon, whilſt *Philpots* made the Cole-houſe a Palace.

Fox Acts and Mon. Omnis nobis vilis eſt pœna, ubi pura comes eſt conſcientia. *Tibura. apud. Baron. An.* 168.

Are Gods Saints in the Stocks? *Better it is*, ſayes *Philpot*, *to ſit in the Stocks of*

of the world, then in the ſtocks of a damnable conſcience. Therefore though they be in the Stocks, yet even then, *the righteous doth ſing and rejoyce,* yea, even in the Stocks, and priſon; *Paul* and *Silas* ſang in the Stocks. Sing in the Stocks? Nay more; they can ſing in the flames, and in the middſt of the fires, *Iſay.24.15. Gloriſie God in the fires.* And worthy *Hawks* could clap his hands in the middſt of the flames. So great and ſo paſſing all underſtanding is the peace and comfort of a good conſcience. So that in ſome ſenſe that may be ſaid of it which is ſpoken of faith, *Heb.11.34.* By it *they quenched the violence of fire.* Gods ſervants were ſo rapt, and raviſht with the ſenſe of Gods love, and their inward peace of conſcience, that they ſeem'd to have a kind of happy dedolencie, and want of feeling of the ſmart of outward torments.

Hinc eſt quod è contrario innocens etiam inter ipſa tormenta fruitur conſcientiæ ſecuritate, & cum de pœna metuat de innocentia gloriatur. *Hieron. ad Demetri. ad. ep. 2.*

Who knowes what trialls God may bring him to? Wee have no patent for our peace, nor his free liberty in the profeſſion of the Goſpel. Suppoſe we ſhould be cald to the ſtake for Chriſts ſake. Would we be chearful, would we ſing in the flames? Get a good conſcience. The cauſe of Chriſt is a good cauſe, now with a good

a good cauſe get a good conſcience, and wee ſhall be able with all chearfulneſſe to lay downe our lives for Chriſt, and his Goſpel ſake.

Chap. XII.

The comfort and benefit of a good conſcience in the dayes of Death and Iudgement.

IN the fourth place, The time of death is a time wherein the benefit and comfort of a good conſcience is exceeding great. Death hath a ghaſtly looke and terrible, able to daunt the proudeſt and braveſt ſpirit in the world, but then hath it a ghaſtly looke indeed, when it faces an evill conſcience. Indeed ſometimes, and moſt commonly, conſcience in many, is ſecure at the time of death. God in his juſtice, ſo plaguing an affected ſecurity in life, with an inflicted ſecurity at Death. And the Lord ſeemes to ſay as once to the Prophet, Go make their conſciences aſleepe at their death, as they have made it aſleepe all their life, leſt conſcience ſhould ſee and ſpeake, and they heare, and be ſaved. God deales with

4. The comfort of a good conſcience at the day of Death.

with conſcience as with the Prophet, *Ez.* 3.26. *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roofe of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumbe*; therefore they die, though not deſparately as *Saul*, and *Achitophel*, yet ſottiſhly without comfort, and feeling of Gods love as *Nabal*. But if conſcience be awakened, and have its eyes, and mouth opened, no heart can imagine the deſparate and unſufferable diſtreſſes of ſuch an heart, *Terrours take hold of him, as waters*, *Iob* 27.20. *Terrours make him afraid on every ſide*, *Iob* 18.11. Then is that true, *Iob* 25.23, 24. *Hee knowes that the day of darkneſſe is ready at hand. Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall prevaile againſt him, as a King ready to the battell.* And no wonder, for hee is now brought unto the *King of Terrours*, as Death is called, *Iob* 18.14. A man that hath an ill conſcience, if his eyes be opened, and his conſcience awakened, he ſees death in all the terrible ſhapes that may bee. Sometimes he ſees death comming like a mercileſſe Officer, and a cruell Sergeant, to arreſt, and to drag him by the throat to the priſon and place of Torment, *Pſal.* 55.15. *Let death ſeize upon them.* They ſee it comming like that cruell

cruell ſervant in the Parable to his fellow, *Math.* 18. catching them by the very throat.

Sometimes he ſees death in the ſhape of ſome greedy Lyon, or ſome ravening Wolfe ready to devour him, and to feed upon his carkaſſe, *Pſ.* 49.14. *Death ſhall feed on them*, even as a ravenous beaſt ſhall feed upon his prey. Imagine in what a terrible plight the *Samaritans* where in when the Lyons ſet upon them, 2 *Kin.* 17. and by it imagine in what caſe an ill conſcience is, when it beholds the face of death. It puts an ill conſcience into that caſe in good earneſt that *David* was in, in the caſe of triall, *Pſ.* 55.4,5. *My heart is ſore pained within me, and the terrors of death are fallen upon me, fearfulneſſe and trembling are come upon mee, and horrour hath overwhelmed me.*

Sometimes againe he ſees death as the *Iſraelites* the fiery ſerpents with mortall ſtings; Sometimes as a mercileſſe landlord, or the Sheriffe comming with a Writ of *Firmæ ejectione*, to throw him out of houſe and home, and to turne him to the wide Common; yea he ſees death as Gods executioner and meſſenger of eternall death, yea, hee ſees death with

with as much horrour as if hee ſaw the Devill. In ſo many fearfull ſhapes appeares death to an evill conſcience upon the death-bed. So as it is indeed the *King of terrors* to ſuch an one that hath the terrors of conſcience within. There is no one thought ſo terrible to ſuch an one, as the thought of death, nothing that hee more wiſhes to avoid. Oh! how loath, and unwilling is ſuch an one to dye.

But come now to a man that hath lived as *Paul* did in all good conſcience, and how is it with him upon his death-bed? His end is peace; ſo full of joy and comfort; ſo is hee raviſhed with the inward and unſpeakable conſolations of his conſcience, that it is no wonder at all that *Balaam* ſhould wiſh to dye the death of the righteous, the death of a man with a good conſcience.

The day of a mens mariage, *is the day of the joy* of a mans *heart*, *Can.* 3. 11. and the day of mariage is not ſo joyfull a day, as is the day of death to a good conſcience. There are but few that can marry with that joy wherewith a good conſcience dies.

It enables a man not onely to looke *Ananias* and the Councel in the face, but

but even to look death it ſelfe in the face, without thoſe amazing terrours, yea, it makes the face of death ſeeme lovely, and amiable. Hee whoſe conſcience is good, and ſees the face of God reconciled to him in Chriſt, hee can ſay as *Iacob* did when he ſaw the face of *Ioſeph*, *Gen.* 46.30. *Now let me dye, ſince I have ſeene thy face.* It is the priviledge of a good conſcience alone, to goe to the grave, as *Agag* did to *Samuel*, and to ſay that truly, which he ſpake beſides the booke, 1 *Sam.* 15.32. *Hee came pleaſantly, and hee ſaid, Surely the bitterneſſe of death is paſt.* Hee was deceived, and therefore had no ſuch cauſe to be ſo pleaſant, but a good conſcience can, yea, cannot chuſe but be ſo pleaſant, even when going out of the world, becauſe the guilt of ſinne being waſhed away in Chriſts blood; it knowes that the bitterneſſe of death is paſt, and the ſweetneſſe of life eternall is at hand.

A man whoſe debts are paid, he dares goe out of doores, dare meet and face the Sergeants, and the conſcience purged by the blood of Chriſt, can look as undauntedly on the face of death. He that hath forgotten the ſting, that is, the guilt of conſcience, taken away by faith in Chriſt,

he lookes not upon death as the *Iſraelites* upon the fiery Serpents, but lookes upon it as *Paul* doth, 1 *Cor.* 15. *O death where is thy ſting?* Who feares a Bee, an Hornet, a Snake, or a Serpent, when they have loſt their ſting. The guilt of ſinne is the ſting of conſcience, its the ſting of death that ſtings the conſcience. *The ſting of death is ſinne,* 1 *Cor.* 15. Plucke then ſin out of the conſcience, and at once the conſcience is made good, and death made weake, and diſarmed of his weapon. And when the conſcience ſees death unſtinged and diſarmed, it is freed of feare, and even in the very act of death, can joyfully triumph over death, oh Death where is thy ſting?

A good conſcience lookes upon death, as upon the Sheriffe that comes to give him poſſeſſion of his Inheritance, or as *Lazarus* upon the Angels that came to carry his ſoule into *Abrahams* boſome, and therfore can welcome death, and entertaine him joyfully. And whereas an ill conſcience makes a man ſee death as if he ſaw the Devill, a good conſcience makes a man ſee the face of death, as *Iacob* ſaw *Eſau's* face, *Gen.* 33. *I have ſeene thy face, as the face of God*; they ſee the face of death

eath with unſpeakeable joy, raviſhment of heart, and exultation of ſpirit.

Well now, what a motive have wee here, to make us labour for good conſcience. Even *Balaam* himſelfe would faine make a good end, and die in peace: and who wiſhes not his death-bed may be a mount *Nebo*, from whence he may ſee the heavenly *Canaan?* Lo here, *Balaam*, the way to dye the death of the righteous; *I have lived in all good conſcience untill this day*. They that have conſcience in their life, ſhal have comfort at their death; they that live conſcionably, they ſhal dy comfortably; they that live in all good conſcience till their dying day, ſhall depart in the abundance of comfort at their dying day.

There will come a day wherein wee muſt lay downe theſe Tabernacles, the day of death will aſſuredly come. How lamentable a thing will it then be, to be ſo deſtitute, and deſolate of all comfort, as to be driven to that extremity, as to curſe our birth day? oh! what would Comfort be worth at our laſt houre, at our laſt gaſpe, whilſt our deareſt friends, ſhall be weeping, wringing their hands and lamenting; then, then what would

inward comfort be worth? Who would not hold the whole world an eaſie price for it then? Well then, would wee then have Comfort and Ioy, oh then get a good conſcience now, which will yield comfort, when all other comforts ſhall utterly faile, and ſhall be life in the middſt of death. How happy is that man, that when the ſentence of death is paſſed upon him, can ſay with *Hezekiah*, *Iſ.*38.3. *Remember now O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy ſight.* Indeed the text ſayes, that *Hezekiah* wept ſore, but yet, not as fearing death, for hee could not feare death, who had thus feared God, but becauſe the promiſe was not yet made good to him in a Son and Heire of his kingdome; hence came thoſe teares. It is otherwiſe an unſpeakable joy, that ſuch a conſcience as *Hezekiahs* was, will ſpeake to a man upon his death-bed.

Every one profeſſes a deſire to make a good end: Here is the way to make good that deſire, to live in all good conſcience. Alas how pittifull, and miſerable a condition live moſt men in; All the dayes of their life and health, they have no regard of

of a good conſcience. Notwithſtanding that men are preſſed continually to this one care, by the inſtancie and importunitie of Gods Miniſters, yet how miſerably is it neglected? Well, at laſt the day of death comes, and then what would not they give for a comfortable end? If the gold of Ophir would purchaſe comfort, it ſhould flie then. Then poaſt for this Miniſter, and run for the other, as in the ſweating ſickneſſe in King *Edwards* dayes, then for Gods ſake but one word of comfort, then O bleſſed men of God, one word of peace. Now alas what would you have them to doe? Are they or your own courſes in fault, that you want comfort at your death? What would you have us doe? Wee muſt referre you to your owne conſciences, we cannot make oyle of flint, nor cruſh ſweet wine out of ſowre Grapes, we dare not flatter you againſt your cõſciences. If you would give us a world, we cannot comfort you when your owne conſciences witneſſe againſt you, that ſuch comforts belong not to you. Doe not idely in this caſe hope for comfort from Miniſters, be it knowne unto you, you muſt have it from your owne conſciences. Many on their death-

bed cry to the Miniſter, as ſhe did to the King, 2 *King* 6. 26,27. *Helpe my Lord O King.* But marke what hee anſwers, *If the Lord doe not helpe thee, whence ſhall I helpe thee, out of the barne floore, or out of the Wine preſſe?* So muſt wee anſwer to ſuch as cry, Helpe, helpe, O man of God: If God and your owne conſciences helpe you not, whence ſhall we help you? If there had beene Corne within the barnes, the King could eaſily have helped her, but he could not make corne: So if men have carryed any thing into their conſciences, if they themſelves have inned any proviſion and comfort, by being conſcionable in their lives, then we can helpe and comfort them, but otherwiſe doe not thinke that we can make comforts, and make good conſciences upon your death-beds. If your conſciences can ſay for you, that you have beene carefull in your life time to know God, to walke holily and religiouſly before him, &c. then wee dare be bold to comfort and cheere you, then dare wee ſpeake peace confidently to you. But if your conſciences accuſe you of your ignorance, your oathes, Sabbath-breaches, worldlineſſe, rebellion, unclean-

cleanneſſe, oppreſſion, drunkenneſſe, &c. and finally, impenitencie: What is it you would have us to doe? What can wee ſay, but as the Prophet to *Zedekiah*, *Ier.* 37. 19. *Where* are now *your Prophets that propheſied unto you, ſaying, the King of Babylon ſhall not come againſt you?* So, where be thoſe that in your life time told you, ye need not to be ſo careful and preciſe to keep good conſciences, leſſe a-do will ſerve the turne, *now* what think ye of them? *now* what peace have you in thoſe wayes, what comfort can theſe give you *now?* Or elſe what can we ſay when men in anguiſh of conſcience lye toſſing upon their beds, but what *Reuben* ſaid to his brethren when they were in diſtreſſe, *Gen.* 42. 21, 22. *Did not I warne you, ſaying, Sin not, &c.* So muſt wee, what doe ye call to us for comfort? did not wee warne you many a time and oft, ſaying, Sinne not, nor live in thoſe dangerous courſes? Did not wee warne you? Oh to have our conſciences and Gods Miniſters thus to grate upon us, what an uncomfortable condition will this be? Would wee then prevent ſuch ſorrow, and be cheerfull, and cheered at our latter ends? lay up a good conſcience,

then, lay in ſomewhat for conſcience, and Gods Miniſters to worke upon, and from which they both may be able to raiſe comfort to you. Get a good conſcience, and live in it all thy dayes, and then though thou ſhouldeſt want the benefit of a comforting Miniſter, yet thy conſcience ſhall doe the office of a comforting Miniſter, and ſ all be the ſame unto thee that the Angel was unto Chriſt in his agony, *Luke* 22.43. and ſhall miniſter ſuch comfort unto thee, as ſhall make thee ready to leap into the grave for joy. This ſhall be as another *Iacobs* ſtaffe for thee to leane & reſt upon, when thou ſhalt be upon thy death-bed. If men knew but the worth of a good conſcience at the houre of death, wee ſhould need no other motive to worke mens hearts to be in love therewith.

5. The comfort of a good conſcience at the day of Iudgement.

Fiftly and laſtly, the benefit and comfort of a good conſcience is great at the day of judgement. Oh the ſweet comfort and confidence of heart that a good conſcience will yield unto a man at that day. What will become of all the Gigantean ſpirits, and the brave fellowes of the earth then? Alas for their yellings, and curſing of themſelves, and their companions!

panions! what howling and crying to the mountaines, as they did, *Revel. 6. Hide* us, *Cover* us, yea, daſh and quaſh us in a thouſand pieces. When an ill conſcience is awakened, it is not to be imagined how ſmall a thing will gaſtre it. *The ſound of a ſhaken leafe ſhall chaſe them, and they ſhall fly, as flying from a ſword, and they ſhall fall when none purſues, Levit. 26. 36. A dreadfull ſound is in his eares, Iob.* 15. 21. Hee heares nothing, but he thinkes he heares alwaies ſome terrible and dreadfull noiſe. And then if a ſhaken leafe ſhall chaſe, and ſhall put them into a ſhaking feare, what caſe will ſuch be in, when as *Iob* ſpeakes *Iob* 26. 11. *The pillars of heaven ſhall tremble*, and when *the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken, Luke* 21. 26. When the heavens ſhall ſhake and flame above them, when the earth ſhall quake, and tremble under them, what caſe will they be in then? If meere imaginations fill their eares with *dreadfull ſounds* where there is no ſound at all: Oh what a dreadfull ſound ſhall be in their eares when the *Sea ſhall roare, Luk* 21. 25. when *the laſt trumpe ſhall ſound*, 1 *Cor.* 15. when they ſhall heare the *ſhout and voyce of an Angel*, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16. what dreadfull ſounds will theſe be in the eares

of ill conſciences? How will theſe dread-full ſounds confound their ſoules with horrour and amazement.

But now for a good conſcience, how is it with it then? Even amiddſt all theſe dreadfull ſounds it *lookes up*, and *lifts up the head*, *Luke* 21.28. and enables a man with a cheery confidence *to ſtand before the Son of man*, *Luke* 21.36.

The Malefactor who looks for the halter, how dreadful is the Iudges cõming to the Aſſiſes, attended with the troopes of halberds, in his eye; but the priſoner that knowes his owne innocencie, and that he ſhall be quit & diſcharged, his heart leaps at the Iudges approach, how terrible ſoever he come attẽded to the bench, it glads his heart to ſee that day, which ſhalbe the day of his liberty & releaſe. *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, *Ioh.* 13.16. much leſſe, ſhal *look up*, & *lift up his head*, or *ſtand before him*, *Pſ.* 1.5. But the righteous, and the man with a good conſcience, he ſhall hold up, and cheerfully lift up his head, when all the ſurly, and proud *Zamzummins* of the earth, that here lifted up their heads and nebs ſo high, ſhall become howling and trembling ſuitors to the deafe mountaines to hide them from the pre-

preſence of the Lambe on the throne. Oh! they that feare the Lambe on the throne, how dreadfull unto them will be the Lyon on the throne?

It will be with good and evill conſciences in that day, as it was with *Pharoahs* Butler, and Baker, on *Pharaohs* birth-day. The Butler he knew hee ſhould be reſtored to honour, and go from the Priſon to the Palace, therefore he comes out of the priſon ful of joy, & jollity, he holds up his head, and outfaces the proudeſt of his enemies. But the Baker hee knowes his head ſhall be lift from off him, and therefore when *Pharaohs* birth-day comes, wherein all others are in jollity, yet hee droopes and hangs downe the head, hee knowes it would prove an heavie day of reckoning with him.

Such will the apparition of Chriſt unto judgement be, unto good and evill conſciences, as was the apparition of the Angel, *Math.* 28.2,3,4,5. *There was a great earthquake, for the Angel of the Lord deſcended frō heaven, his countenance was like lightening, and his rayment white as ſnow.* Here was a terrible ſight, but yet not alike terrible to all the beholders. For, *for feare of him the keepers did ſhake, & became like*

like dead men. But the *Angel ſaid unto the women, feare not ye, for I know that ye ſeek Ieſus.* So at the laſt day when Chriſt ſhall come to judgment, evill conſciences ſhall be as the Keepers, whilſt all good conſciences ſhall heare that comfortable voice, *Feare not yee*, for I know that you have ſought for God, & all your daies ye have ſought to keepe a good conſcience. How effectuall a motive ſhould this bee, how ſtrongly ſhould this work with us. As we ſhould be glad to hold up our heads, when the glorious ones of the earth ſhall hang them down, to leape for joy, when others ſhall howle for bitter anguiſh of ſpirit, ſo now whileſt wee have the day of life and grace, labour we to get and keepe good conſciences.

Chap. XIII.

A ſecond motive, A good conſcience is a continuall feaſt.

The ſecond motive to a gooo conſcience.

THus have wee ſeene the firſt motive, from the benefit and comfort of a good conſcience, in ſuch caſes, and times, as a man ſtands moſt in need of comfort. A *ſecond motive* followes, and that is that we

we find, *Prov.* 15.15. *A good conſcience is a continuall feaſt.* 1. It is a *feaſt.* 2. Better than a feaſt. It is a *continuall* feaſt.

1. *It is a feaſt.* The excellencie of a good conſcience is ſet forth by the ſame thing, by which our Saviour ſets forth the happineſſe of heaven, *Luk.* 14. And well may both be ſet forth by the ſame Metaphor, conſidering what a neere affinitie there is between heaven and a good conſcience, and that there is no feaſting in heaven, unleſſe there be firſt the feaſt of a good conſcience here on earth. But why a *feaſt?* A feaſt for three regards.

Quo enim melius epulantur animi quam bonis factis? aut quid aliud tam facile potuit explere juſtorum mentes quã boni operis cõſcientia? *Ambro. de offic. l. 1. c. 31.*

1. For the *ſelfe ſufficiencie,* and ſweet *ſatisfaction* and *contentment* that a good conſcience hath within it ſelfe. Feaſting and faſting are oppoſite. In faſting upon the want of food there is an emptineſſe and a griping hunger, which makes the body inſatiably to crave. But at a feaſt there is abundance, and variety of all diſhes and dainties, ready at hand to ſatisfie a mans appetite to the full, he can have a mind to nothing but it is before him. The very beſt of every thing that is to be had is at a feaſt. *A feaſt of fat things, Iſa.* 25.6. *of fat things full of marrow.* Such is the ſufficencie of ſatisfaction, the abundance of

of ſweetneſſe, and contentment that is to be found in a good conſcience. It is a table richly furniſht with all varieties, and dainties. There is no pleaſure, comfort, or contentment that a mans heart can wiſh, but it may be abundantly had in a good conſcience; as at a feaſt there is a collection of all the dainties and delicacies that ſea and land can afford.

2. For the *mirth* and *joy* of it. *A feaſt is made for laughter, Eccl.* 10.19. At a feaſt there is mirth, muſick, and delight in the comfortable uſe of the creatures. Heavineſſe of heart, penſiveneſſe, and ſorrow, theſe are baniſht from the houſe of feaſting. Faſting and feaſting are oppoſite, in faſting indeed there is weeping, mourning and ſorrowing; but in a feaſt contrarily, there is mirth, merriment and joy.

There were under the Law appointed ſolemn holy feaſts anniverſarily to be celebrated, and at thoſe ſolemn feaſts were the ſilver trumpets ſounded, *Num.* 10.10. and the ſound of the trumpets was a *joyfull ſound, Pſ.* 89.15. For their Feſtivities were to be kept with ſpeciall joy, *Deut.* 16.10,11,13,14,15. *Thou ſhalt keepe* the feaſt *of weekes unto the Lord, &c. and thou ſhalt* rejoyce *before the Lord, &c. Thou ſhalt*

ſhalt obſerve the feaſt of Tabernacles ſeven dayes, &c. And thou ſhalt rejoyce *in the* feaſt, *&c. Therefore thou ſhalt ſurely rejoyce.* And that extraordinary feaſt on the fourteenth & fifteenth of *Adar*, in memorial of their deliverance from *Haman*, ſee how it was kept *Eſth.9.19.22.* They kept them dayes of *gladneſſe and feaſting, of feaſting and joy.* Even ſuch is the excellencie of a good conſcience. All the merriment and muſick, wine and good chear, will not make a mans heart ſo light and ſo merry, as the wine which is drunke at the feaſt of a good conſcience will doe. This takes away all heavineſſe and ſadneſſe of ſpirit, and hath the like effects with naturall wine. It makes a man *forget* his ſpiritual *poverty, and remember that miſery no more, Pro.31.7.* Nay, as wine not only takes away ſadnes, but withal brings a naturall gladneſſe with it, *Pſ.104.15. Wine that makes glad the heart of man:* ſo doth this wine at this feaſt, *Pſal.97.11, 12. Light is ſowne for the righteous, and gladneſſe for the upright in heart, Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous.* None ſo glad an heart, as the upright in heart. Nay, ſuch is the vigour and ſtrength of this wine, at this feaſt, that it not onely glads a mans

a mans heart, but makes a man as not able to containe, even to ſhout for joy, *Pſalm.* 32. 11. *Shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart,* yea *ſhout aloud for joy, Pſal.* 132. 16. That look as it is ſaid of the Lord, *Pſ.* 78. 65. *The Lord awaked like a mighty man that ſhouts by reaſon of wine.* So ſuch is the plenty, abundance, ſweetneſſe, and ſtrength of the wine of this feaſt, that it makes men in a holy jollity, even to break forth into ſhouting, and ſinging. This wine being liberally drunken, wherein there is no exceſſe, fils a mans heart with ſuch an overflowing exuberancie of joy, as hee cannot hold, but hee muſt needs ſhew it in Pſalmes, Hymnes and ſpirituall ſongs; and hence it is that *the righteous do ſing and rejoyce, Pro.* 29. 6. So that what joy a feaſt can yield; that can a good conſcience yield much more, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our* rejoycing, *the teſtimonie of our conſcience.* Yea and that joy commanded, *Deut.* 16. at the feaſt of Tabernacles what was it but a Type of that ſpirituall joy, that the faithful under Chriſt ſhould have in keeping the feaſt of a good conſcience? The feaſt of a good conſcience is the true feaſt of Tabernacles, in which as in the other, there ſhall need no charge

to

to rejoyce, and be merry, this feaſt will put ſuch ſpirit and life into a man, as ſhall make him ſing, skip, and ſhout for joy.

The feaſt of a good conſcience is not like a funerall feaſt, where mirth and joy are unſeemely, and unſeaſonable gueſts, there are heavie hearts and lookes, teares, and mourning, (which by the way how well they ſuit with feaſting let the world judge) but the feaſt of a good conſcience is a nuptiall feaſt, a marriage feaſt, and the day of marriage is *the day of the joy of a mans heart, Cant.* 3.11. Such a feaſt, even a joyfull marriage feaſt doth a good conſcience make.

Oftentimes theſe bodily feaſts are but heavie feaſts, many for all their good cheere, company, and muſicke, cannot put away the heavineſſe of their hearts, but even in their feaſt are ſad hearted, and *Sampſons* wife *wept* all the dayes of the feaſt, *Iudg.* 14.17. yea though a marriage feaſt. But in this feaſt of a good cõſcience here is no ſorrow, heavineſſe, or ſad melancholly, but all joy and gladneſſe.

3. For the *ſociety* and *company*. A feaſt is a collection, and a convention of many good friends together, whoſe ſociety and friendſhip is ſweet each to other. There

is no feaſt can afford the like company that a good conſcience hath. *Woe to him that is alone*, *Ecc.* 4. that is the wofull and ſolitary condition of evill conſciences. But a good conſcience hath ever good company, *is not alone*, for the Father is with it, *Ioh.* 16. 23. yea, the Son is with it: and Chriſt, and the man with a good conſcience, they *ſup*, and *feaſt* together, *Revel.* 3. 20. yea, and the ſpirit is with it, 1 *Cor.* 13. 13. *The Communion of the Holy Ghoſt be with you.* What feaſt in the world can ſhew ſuch company? And good company is the chiefe thing in a feaſt. Thus a good conſcience is a feaſt.

2. It is *better* than a feaſt. And that in three regards.

1. In regard of the *continuance* and *perpetuity* of it, *A continuall feaſt. Nabal* made a feaſt, a feaſt like a King, 1 *Sam.* 25. but that feaſt laſted but one day. *Sampſon* at his marriage had a feaſt that laſted ſeven daies, *Iudg.* 14. 17. but yet that feaſt had an end. *Ahaſhueroſh* his feaſt was the longeſt feaſt that ever we read of, *Eſth.* 1. 4. *Hee made a feaſt many dayes, an hundred and fourſcore daies.* But yet *v.* 5. it is ſaid, *And when thoſe dayes were expired.* So this long feaſt had an end. It was continued for many

many dayes, but yet no continuall feaſt, it had an end. The feaſt of a good conſcience is not like an *Vniverſity* Commencement feaſt. Great exceedings, and extraordinary good cheere and company for one night, but the next morrow to their bare Commons againe. Not like the *feaſt* of the *Nativity*, at which time there is great feaſting, and great cheere every where for twelve dayes, but when thoſe dayes are over, many a man is glad of bread and cheeſe, glad to skip at a cruſt. But this is a continuall feaſt all the yeare long, all a mans life long. Therfore 1 *Theſ.* 5.16. *Rejoyce evermore*, keep open houſe, and feaſting all the yeare long. The joy of a good conſcience was figured by the joy at the feaſt of Tabernacles. That feaſt laſted ſeven dayes. The joy muſt bee as long. Seven the number of perfection, denoted the whole courſe of a mans life, and ſo their ſeven dayes joy, the *continuall joy* and jollity of this *continuall feaſt* of a good conſcience.

Conſcience and a wife, as they agree in many things, be they good, be they ill, ſo in this alſo. If the conſcience be evill, it is like an *evill wife*, and ſhe a *continuall evill*, *Prov.* 27.15. *A continuall dropping in a*

very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike. The contentions of a wife are *a continuall dropping*, *Prov.*19.13. A ſhrewiſh waſpiſh wife, is a continuall vexation and diſquiet. Such is an evill conſcience, a continuall ſorrow. Contrarily, a good conſcience is like a *good wife*, a good wife is *a continuall comfort*, a comfort in health, in ſickneſſe, in peace, in diſtreſſe, *Pro.*31. 12. *She doth him good and not evill* all the dayes *of her life*. Not ſome good, and a great deale of evill withall, but all good, good & not evill. Not good at ſometime, and none at other times, *but all the daies of her life*, ſhe is a continuall comfort. So is the comfort of a good conſcience. It keepes holy-day and feaſting every day. It is all feaſt; a feaſt for ever; there is no *Lent*, or *faſting* dayes that interrupt this feaſt. This is the peculiar privilege of this feaſt to be continuall; belly feaſting cannot be ſo: for 1. A man cannot alwayes feaſt though he would, a mans revenues would bee exhauſt, his expences would ſoone ſink his eſtate. Continuall feaſting would ſoone begger and undoe a man of good eſtate, *Pro.*21.17. *Hee that loves Wine and Oyle ſhall not be rich*. It is not ſo here; the revenue of a good conſcience is bot-

bottomleſſe, it cannot be ſpent, and therfore is able to keepe a rich and a full furniſht Table all the yeare long. Here is a myſterie in this feaſt, the larger expences to day, the more laid in to keepe the feaſt the better to morrow; a man growes rich by feaſting.

2. Suppoſe a man might be able to feaſt alwayes, or might feed at another mans Table continually, yet would it weary a man beyond meaſure. It would but gug and cloy a man. All earthly pleaſures have a ſatietie, and breed a loathing by frequent uſe. But this is the admirable excellencie of this feaſt of a good conſcience, here a man may feed and eate with continuall delight. At this continual feaſt, heere is a continuall freſh appetite, and freſh delights; here is continuall feaſting without loathing and ſatiety.

Voluptas tunc cum maxime delectat extinguitur. Nec multum loci habet; iatq; cito implet & tædio eſt, & poſt primum impetum marcet. *Senec. de vir. beat. c. 7.*

3. Neither *may* belly feaſting be *continuall*. There be ſome times wherein it is inconvenient and unlawfull. To ſpeake with the faireſt, that day which God hath ſanctified for his ſervice, is not ſo convenient for feaſting. It may be no leſſe dangerous to devour *ſanctified time*, than *ſanctified things*. And in this caſe hath that ſaying a truth, *It is not meet that we ſhould*

the Word of God, and ſerue Tables, Act. 6.

2. But now this feaſt without any doubt may bee on the Sabbath, yea, it is the ſpeciall feſtivall, and high day of the weeke, wherein this feaſt is beſt kept. Againe, there be times wherein God calls to ſolemne faſting and humilation, as when the Church is either in danger or diſtreſſe; but this feaſt is not hindred by faſting, it will ſtand well with it, and many a ſpeciall dainty diſh is ſerved in to this feaſting from a faſt.

4. Suppoſe a man could and might, feaſt alwayes, yet were it a brutiſh thing, and hog-like allwayes for a man to be cramming and crowding in belly cheere, allwayes to bee pauncing and gutting. It is that for which the rich Glutton is taxed, *Luk. 16.* That *he fared deliciouſly every day*. But here to feaſt at this Table *every day*, is that which makes a man every whit as *Angel like*, as belly-feaſting every day makes a man *ſwine-like*. Here it is a mans happineſſe to be a holy *Epicure*.

Nunquam crediderîs felicem qui adventitio lætus eſt, exhibirgaudium quod intravit. Sen. ep 99.

2. It is better then other feaſts, in regard of the *Independencie* of this feaſt vpon any other out-ward thing. This feaſt is able to maintaine it ſelfe of it ſelfe, and within it ſelfe. A man that hath a good conſci-

conſcience, hath a feaſt, though he have nothing elſe but it. A good conſcience, though it have nothing but browne bread and water, yet this hard fare marres not the feaſt; For this feaſt *ſtands not in meates, and drinks, but in righteouſneſſe, peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. *Quietneſſe and a dry morſell is better then an houſefull of good cheare with ſtrife*, Pro. 17. 1. Though it be but outward *quietneſſe*, when a man is free from vnjuſt vexations, and the moleſtations of froward and contentious diſpoſition, even ſuch quietneſſe makes a *dry morſell* good cheere, makes a feaſt of a cruſt. But when there is inward quietneſſe of a good conſcience, and a mans heart is at quiet from his peace with his God, what excellent cheere is a *dry morſel*, then? Though a man have ever ſo good fare, yet to have it ſawced with the bitterneſſe of contention, and to live in a continuall wrangling with peviſh people, what poore content would a well furniſht Table afford ſuch a man? And what poore cheere, eſpecially, would all theſe feaſts in the world make, where there is brawling and contention from the conſcience? Here then is the excellencie of this feaſt above all other feaſts. This feaſt

is able to ſubſiſt, and to maintaine it ſelfe without other feaſting; other feaſting is nothing without this of a good conſcience. Other feaſting often hurts and hinders this feaſt, whileſt men by their vaine and licentious carriage therein, *Feaſting without all feare, Iude.* 12. Doe make the conſcience faſt and ſtarve; and whileſt their Quailes are betweene their teeth, *Leanneſſe enters into their ſoule. Pſalm.* 106. 5. So farre is bodily feaſting from helping, that it hinders this feaſting rather. Conſcience, can have mirth enough without a feaſt, but little is the comfort and content that a feaſt can give, where the Conſcience is not good. Men may ſet a face vpon it and bragge, laugh, and be jolly in their feaſting, but yet in the *middeſt of their laughter the heart is ſorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heavineſſe, Prov.* 14. 13. Conſcience awakened even in the middeſt of the greateſt jollitie, gives men many a bitter twitch at the heart, and in the middeſt of all their revellings, gives them *Vineger* and *Gall* to drinke. A good conſcience is it that ſweetens and ſeaſons all the diſhes of a feaſt, that is the ſawce that makes meat ſavoury, the ſugar that ſweetens Wine, that

Sed non eſt iſta hilaritas longa. Obſerva, videbis eoſdem in exiguum tempus atertime ridere, & acerrime rudere. *Senec ep. 92.*

that is the muſicke that makes a mans heart dance.

But let a man goe to the moſt ſumptuous, and delicious feaſts without a good conſcience, and how is it with him then? Iuſt as with *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. Where the hand writing on the wall marred all his mirth; or elſe it is in ſuch a caſe, as it was with *Haman*. The foole brags that he alone is invited to *Eſters* banquet with the King, *Eſth.* 5. 12. Oh how happy a man was he, under how fortunate a Planet was he borne, to be the King and Queenes Favorite both? But ſee what little reaſon hee had to brag, *Chap.* 7. 2. Even at the *banquet of Wine*, *Eſther* gives him a cup of gall: at the banquet of Wine doth ſhe accuſe *Haman* to the King. Oh! how many glory in their banquetting, and their feaſting, but how often doe their conſcienees put *Eſthers* tricke vpon them, even accuſe them to God, and gall and gird them in the midſt of their wine? conſcience ſerves many, as *Abſoloms* villaines ſerved *Amnon*, when his heart was merry at *Abſoloms* feaſt, then they ſtabd him to the heart. Cõſcience deales with them, as the *Iſraelites* were dealt withal in their quaile feaſt. They had their Quailes, and their dainties,

dainties, but a man would rather want their good cheere, than have their ſawce. Their ſweet meat had ſharpe ſawce. Whilſt the fleſh was between their teeth, Gods anger brake in upon them. So whilſt many are chewing their dainties, conſcience fils their mouth with gravell, and ſo ſawces and ſpices their diſhes, that they find but little content therein. So miſerable are all feaſts and merriments of this world, when a man wants the independent feaſt of a good conſcience. So happy alſo are they that have the feaſt of a good conſcience, although they never taſte bit of other feaſt whilſt they live, although they be denied the crums that fall under the feaſting Gluttons table.

3. It is better in regard of the *Vniverſality* of it. As for belly feaſts, it ſtands not with every mans condition and purſe, to make them. It belongs onely to the richer and abler ſort to feaſt. Feaſting is a matter of charge and coſt, and ſo is out of the reach of the poorer ſort. But here is the excellencie of this feaſt. The pooreſt that is may make it, and the poore have as good priviledge to make it as the rich, and the poore in this reſpect may keepe as good an houſe as the beſt Nobleman, yea,

yea, for the moſt part the poorer ſort keep this feaſt beſt. *Nabal* makes *a feaſt like a king*, but wretched man, in the mean time what feaſt keepes his conſcience? It may be many a poore Carmelite neighbour of his that went in a poore ruſſet coat, and lived in a poore thatcht cottage, kept that feaſt abundantly & richly, whilſt he poore ſot had not the crums that fell from their tables. *Lazarus* could not have the crums that fell from the gluttons table, but how happy had it been with the glutton if in ſtead of this delicious fare he might have had but the reverſions of *Lazarus* boord. *Lazarus* may not come to his feaſt, no nor yet to his fragments, neither will *Lazarus* condition permit him to feaſt it as the glutton did, but yet this feaſt of a good conſcience, *Lazarus* may make as well as hee, and can, and doth keepe it, whilſt the glutton feeles many an hunger-biting gripe. What an excellent feaſt is this above all other feaſts, wherein the ruſſet hath as much priviledge as the velvet, the beggar as the King, the poore tenant, as the rich Landlord? The rich Landlord often ſo feeds upon, and eates up his poor tenant by oppreſſion, that the tenant is kept low enough for feaſting; It is

It is well with him if hee have food, hee had not need thinke of feaſting. But loe now the excellent feaſt of a good conſcience: here may the Tenant keep as good cheere as the Landlord, yea, and it may be may feaſt, whilſt the rich Landlord is ready to ſtarve for want of this proviſion.

Now then all this conſidered, what a *Motive* ſhould it be to make us in love with a good cõſcience. How powerfully ſhould this perſwade us therto? whẽ God would perſwade men to come to the joyes of heaven, hee uſes no other argument than this, to invite them to a feaſt, as in the Parable, *Luk.* 14. Behold, here is the ſame argument, to move you to be in love with a good conſcience, behold the Lord invites you to *a feaſt*, and to a feaſt where ye ſhall have ſufficiencie, without want, or loathing, where ye ſhal have wine, mirth, muſick, and good Company, to the full. The twelve dayes feaſt of the *Nativitie*, how is it longed for before hand, & how welcommed when it is come? And what may the reaſon be? But only becauſe it is a feaſting time. This is counted a bleſſed good time: and why a bleſſed good time? As Chriſt was a bleſſed good man, & the prophet that ſhould come into the world,

and

and therefore ſhould be made a King, becauſe hee had fed and filled their bellies, *Iohn 6.* So the moſt make that a bleſſed time, not for the memorial of Chriſts Incarnatiõ, but becauſe of the loaves Chriſt ſhall be a King,& becauſe of the feaſt, the time is bleſſed. Well then,& is the world ſo deſirous, and ſo glad of feaſting? Are feaſting times ſuch bleſſed times? Lo then I invite you to a feaſt, to a bleſſed good feaſt indeed, that will make you bleſſed and truly happy. Not to a feaſt of twelve daies, but to a feaſt that laſts al the twelve moneths of the yeare, to a continuing, and a continuall feaſt. How glad are many when they may goe to a feaſt? Lo a way to make feaſts for your ſelves. What a credit is it counted in the world for a man to keep a good, and great houſe, to keep feaſting and open-houſe for all commers, during the Feſtivity of the twelve dayes? Would we have this credit of good houſkeeping, not for twelve dayes but for all the yeare long? Get good conſciences, keepe good conſciences. There is no ſuch *good houſe-keeper*, as is the *good conſcience-keeper*; for a good conſcience is a feaſt, a continuall feaſt.

There is nothing that men deſire more than

then to live merrily, and how many ſtumble at Religion, and keeping of a good conſcience, under an idle conceit that it is the way to marre all their mirth, and to make a man lumpiſh and melancholly. Do not believe the devill, do not believe his lying agents? It is a prophane Proverbe, that *Spiritus Calvinianus eſt ſpiritus melancholicus*. A good conſcience is a feaſt, a feaſt with all dainties, muſick, and wine. Can a man be melancholly at a feaſt, at ſo joyfull, and ſo ſweet a feaſt? doth feaſting make men melancholly, or make men merry? make men weepe, or laugh? If a man ſhould cry downe feaſting with this argument, That it makes men melancholly, would not all men laugh him to ſcorn? And why then ſhould a man feare melancholly more from a good conſcience, than from a feaſt? There is none lives ſo merry a life as hee that keepes a good conſcience, hee is every day at a feaſt, hee is alwayes banquetting. Yea, the worſt diſhes of this feaſt, even thoſe at the lower end of the Table, are better than the moſt choice rarities of other feaſts. The very teares that a good conſcience ſheds have more joy and pleaſure in them, than the worlds greateſt joyes. And if the teares

of a

of a good conſcience be ſuch, what is the mirth and laughter of it? If weeping be ſo ſweet, what is ſinging? If the courſer diſhes be ſo dainty, what are the beſt ſervices? Would wee then live merrily, and paſſe our dayes jocundly indeed? Get a good conſcience and thou keepeſt a continuall feaſt, and that continuall feaſt will keepe thee in continuall mirth, and continuall joy. Yea, though thou be in affliction, and under croſſes, ſo as thy dayes unto the world may ſeeme exceedingly evill, ſhalt thou live merrily as at a feaſt. Yea, this is the ſcope of the Scripture, *All the dayes of the afflicted are evill*, namely, in the eye and judgement of the world: *but a good conſcience*, namely, to the afflicted, *is a continuall feaſt*. A good conſcience feaſts then, and turnes faſting dayes into feaſting dayes. A good conſcience feaſts a man in his poverty, in his ſickneſſe, in the priſon, and cheeres up a man with many a dainty bit. The wine of this feaſt makes them forget all their ſorrow.

Now then that we would be ſo wiſe as to hearken to Gods invitation to this feaſt, *Let us keep the feaſt with the bread of ſincerity and truth*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 8. Take heed now that we put not off God as thoſe did,

Luke 14.

Luke 14. invited to the feaſt, with the excuſes of Farmes, Oxen and the like. So doe many, urge them to the keeping of a good conſcience, and their anſwer is, If they ſhould be ſo preciſe, how ſhould they live, they ſhall have but poore takings if they take ſuch a courſe, *I pray have me excuſed*, I muſt live. Thus they anſwer, as many good husbands, when invited to frequent feaſtings, doe, No believe mee it will not hold out, if I goe every day a feaſting, I may goe one day a begging, I muſt follow my buſineſſe, and let feaſting goe. And ſo ſay men here. But take heed of putting off God thus. The time will come that thou wouldſt give all thine oxen to have but the ſcraps & crums of this feaſt, and thou ſhalt not have them, God will ſerve thee as hee did them, *Luk.* 14. 24. *None of thoſe men which were bidden ſhall* taſte *of my ſupper*. Thoſe that care not to keep the feaſt of a good conſcience, ſhall never come to Gods feaſt in heaven. If you refuſe to come to his feaſt now, God will at the laſt day thruſt you out of doores, when you will be preſſing and crowding in, and ſhall ſay to you, Get you hence ye deſpiſers of a good conſcience, you ſcorned the feaſt of a good conſcience,

ſcience, and therefore now the feaſt and gueſts of heaven ſcorne you, here is no roome for ſuch to feaſt here, who have made their conſciences faſt heretofore.

Chap. XIV.

A third and a fourth motive to a good conſcience.

The third motive to a good conſcience.

Come wee now to a *third motive*, that may yet helpe to ſtir up our minds to this neceſſary duty of getting and keeping of a good conſcience. Beſides what hath beene ſaid, it is worthy of our conſideration, that without a good conſcience all our actions, yea our very beſt ſervices to God are ſo farre from goodneſſe and acceptance, that they are abominable and diſtaſtefull unto the Lord. The formall goodneſſe of every mans actions is to be judged and eſteemed by the goodneſſe of his conſcience, which being evill and defiled, makes all a mans actions to be ſuch, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. *The end of the commandement is love.* But what kind of love doth the commandement require, will any ſhewes or ſhadowes of obedience ſerve the turne? will the bare duty doing paſſe for currant?

No, but such love to God and man, and such performance of obedience, as proceeds from *a pure heart and a good conscience*. So that let a man doe all outward actions of obedience, yet if a good conscience be wanting, all is nothing, *For the end of the Commandement is love out of a good conscience*. As is a mans conscience, so are all his workes, and therefore nothing acceptable that a wicked man doth, because hee doth it with an ill conscience. *To the pure all things are pure*, but to the defiled their conscience is defiled, and that being defiled, it defiles all it meddles with, as under the Law the Leaper defiled all he touched. The best meat, dissht and dressed with defiled and dirty hands, is loathsome to us.

The honest works of a mans calling are good workes in themselves, but no good workes to him that doth them without a good conscience, *Pro.*21.4. *An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is Sin*. The calling of Husbandry is counted the most honest calling of all others, yet where a good cõsciẽce is wanting, a mans very plowing is Sin. Come to holy duties of Religion and Gods service, and how is it with a man wanting a good

a good conſcience in them? That curſe of *Davids*, *Pſal.* 109.8. *Let his prayer be turned into Sin*, lies upon the ſervices of all evill conſciences. See *Pro.* 15.8. *The ſacrifice of the wicked*, that is, of him that hath an evill conſcience, *is an abomination: but the prayer of the upright*, that is, of a man that hath a good and upright conſcience, *is his delight*. Obſerve the oppoſition. Hee ſayes not the *prayer* of the wicked, and the *prayer* of the upright, nor the *ſacrifice* of the wicked, and the *ſacrifice* of the upright; but the *ſacrifice* of the wicked, and the *prayer* of the upright. A ſacrifice had prayer with it, but yet it was more ſumptuous & more ſolemn then ſingle prayer. Now who would not thinke but ſuch coſt ſhould make a man welcom, yet the ſingle prayer of the upright is accepted, whilſt his ſacrifice is an abomination, yea, and that a vile abomination, *Iſ.* 66.3. A man of evill conſcience delighting in his abominations, makes his holieſt ſervices ſuch. Let ſuch an one come to the Sacraments, and how will it be with him there? even as in the former, To the impure, even the pure Sacraments are impure. *Simon Magus* rather defiles the waters of Baptiſme, then they cleanſe

him, and it is not carnall baptiſme that availes any thing, without the *anſwer* and *ſtipulation of a good conſcience*, 1 *Pet.* 3.21. And for the Sacrament of the Supper, whether doth it profit an uncleane conſcience, or ſuch a conſcience pollute it? It may be judged by a like caſe reſolved, *Hag.* 2.11,14. The uncleane perſon by a dead body touching the *Bread*, or *Wine*, or *Oyle*, makes theſe to be *uncleane*. The ceremoniall uncleanneſſe by the touch of a *dead body*, typified the morall uncleannes of an evill conſcience, unpurged from *dead works*. God looks ſpecially at the cõſcience in all our ſervices, and if hee finds that foule and filthy, he throws the dung of mens ſacrifices in their faces, that come with the dung of their filthy conſciences, before his face. See therefore how *Paul* ſerves God, 2 *Tim.* 1.3. *Whom I ſerve from my forefathers with pure conſcience.* It is an *impure ſervice* that is not performed with a *pure conſcience*, as ſleight as the world make of puritie. *How much more ſhal the blood of Chriſt purge your conſciences from dead workes, Heb.* 9.14. But to what end are they purged? *To ſerve the living God.* Therfore marke, that till the conſcience be *purged* and made good, there

there is no *ſerving of God.* So *Heb.*10.22. *Let us draw neere,* that is, in prayer, and the like duties; But how? *Having our hearts ſprinkled from an evill conſcience.* Otherwiſe it is but a folly for us to draw neere, for God will not be neere when a good conſcience is far off. And therfore we are bid to *purifie our hearts,* when wee are bid *draw nigh* to God, *Iam.*4.8.

Behold here then a ſpeciall motive to make a good conſcience beautifull in our eye. As we would be loath our ſervices of God, our prayers and holy performances, ſhould be abominable in Gods eye, ſo labour for good conſciences. As we would have cõfort in alour duties of obedience, ſo labor to make our conſcience good. It is a great deale of confidence that ſilly ignorant ones have in their *goodprayers,* & their *good ſerving* of God, as they call it, yea it is all the ground of their hope of ſalvation, when they are demanded an account of their hope: now alas your good prayers, and your good ſerving of God! why what do you talking of theſe things? Hath Chriſt *purged your conſciences from dead workes?* Have you by faith got your *conſciences ſprinkled,* and rinced in Chriſts blood, and ſo have ye made them good?

If not, never talke of *good prayers*, and *good ſerving* of God: your prayers cannot be good whilſt your conſciences are naught. An *evill conſcience* before God, and a *good ſervice* to God cannot ſtand together. But would you have your *prayers good* indeed, and your ſervice acceptable indeed? then let your firſt care be to make your *conſcience good.*

The fourth motive to a good conſcience.

Fourthly, let this worke with us as a maine *motive* to a good conſcience: That it is the *Ship* and the *Arke* wherein the *faith* is preſerved. The faith is a rich commoditie, a precious fraught, and a good conſcience is the bottome, and the veſſell wherein it is caried. So long as the ſhip is ſafe and good, ſo long the goods therin are ſafe; but if the ſhip ſplit upon the Rocks, or have but a leake therein, then are all the goods therein in danger of being loſt and caſt away. So long as a man keeps a good conſcience, there is no feare of loſing the faith, the integrity and ſoundnes of the doctrin therof. *Conſtancie* in the truth, is a fruit of good conſcience, *Pſalm.* 119. 54,55. *I have kept thy Law*; he had not declined from, nor forſaken the truth of God, but what held and kept him? *This I had, becauſe I kept thy pre-*

precepts. Keeping of a good conſcience will keepe a man in the truth: It is that which is the holy preſervative to ſave from all errors, hereſies, & falſe doctrins. The better conſcience, the ſounder judgment, the ſounder heart, the ſounder head. As the better digeſtion in the ſtomach, the freer the head is from aſcēdent fumes that would diſtemper and trouble the ſame. *Iohn 7. 17. If any man will do his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* How ſhall a man come to have a ſound and a good judgement, to be able to judge what is truth, and what is not? Let him get a good conſcience, and make conſcience of *doing the will of God, Iohn 14. 21. Hee that hath my commandements and keepes them, &c.* ſuch a man hath, and keepes a good conſcience. And what benefit ſhall ſuch a one have by keeping of a good conſcience? *I will love him, and I will manifeſt my ſelfe unto him.* And *Pſ. 50. 23. To him that orders his converſation aright, will I ſhew the ſalvation of God.* God doth communicate himſelfe and his truth to ſuch as make conſcience of their wayes. The pure in heart ſhall ſee God, and the ſecret of the Lord is with them that feare him.

So that he that hath a good conſcience, hath the onely Antidote, the moſt excellent Amulet and plague-cake at his breſt that is in the world, to ſave him from the peſtilence, and infection of Popery, Arminianiſme, Browniſme, Anabaptiſme, &c. So long as the Skip of conſcience is whole, ſo long the Iewell of faith is ſafe. *Paul* would have a Biſhop *to hold faſt the faithfull Word*, and to be found in doctrin, *Tit.* 1.9. But yet marke it, that he would firſt have him be a man of a good conſcience in the two foregoing verſes. And 1 *Tim.* 3.9. he would have the Deacons *hold the myſterie of the faith in a pure conſcience.*

Contrarily, nothing ſo endangers the loſſe of the faith and truth, and ſoundneſſe of doctrine, as doth the loſſe of good conſcience. A corrupt conſcience ſoone corrupts the judgement, 1 *Tim.* 1.19. *Holding faith and a good conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning faith have made ſhipwracke.* If the ſhip of conſcience cracke, how ſoone will the merchandize of faith wrack? If once the conſcience crack, the braine will ſoone prove crazie; and an unſound conſcience makes a fearefull way for an unſound and rotten

ten judgement, 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. *They reſiſt the truth*, there is their corrupt conſcience: what followes upon it? *Men of corrupt minds*, unſound in their judgement concerning the faith. How frequent a thing is it in experience to ſee men when they loſe good conſcience, together with it either to *loſe their gifts*, as the unprofitable ſervant his Maſters talent, or elſe, to *loſe the truth*, and to fal into peſtilent and dangerous errours. So thoſe Prophets that made not conſcience in faithfull and holy execution of their office, ſee what was the fruit of their evill conſcience, *Micah* 3. 5, 6, 7. *Therefore night ſhall be unto you that ye ſhall not have a viſion, and it ſhall be darke unto you, that ye ſhall not divine, and the Sun ſhall goe downe over the Prophets, and the day ſhall be darke over them, &c.* Their darkneſſe in life ſhall be plagued with darkneſſe in judgement. To which purpoſe that is notable, *Zach.* 11. 17. *Woe to the idoll ſhepheard that leaves the flocke.* There is an unconſcionable ſhepheard, a man that makes no conſcience to attend his miniſtery. What becomes of him? *The ſword ſhall bee upon his right eye*, his beſt eye. *And his right eye* (ſhall not be pore-blind, or dimmed, but) *ſhall be utterly*

terly darkened. The loſſe of good conſciences brings upon men of knowledge and learning that reproach that *Nahaſh* the Ammonite would have brought upon all Iſrael, 1 *Sam.* 11.2. It thruſts out the *right eyes.* Ill conſciences not only make men look aſquint, but it blinds them, and takes away their ſight.

And what is the reaſon that Popery gets ground ſo faſt, and ſo many turne Papiſts ſo eaſily? Surely it is no wonder, how ſhould it be otherwiſe, when men either having loſt all good conſcience, or making no conſcience of their wayes, but living looſely, viciouſly, and licentiouſly, have thereby prepared a way for Antichriſt, and his Religion, to enter with all ſucceſſe. No wonder that men turne Papiſts ſo faſt, when long ſince they have turned good conſcience going. For that which *Bellarmine* ſpeakes, is in the generall certainly true, though by him falſly, and maliciouſly applyed, That they be not holy and grave men, but wicked, light, curious, wanton ones, that turne Ethnickes, or Heretickes, and that it ſeldome comes to paſſe, that any man makes ſhipwracke concerning the faith, that firſt makes not ſhipwracke con-

Cum aræ ventilari incipiunt, non frumenta ſed paleæ vento abripiente ſeparantur ab area. Ita prorſus cum Eccleſia per Ethnicorum perſecutiones, vel Hæ-

concerning manners. See the truth of it in many of our backſliders to Popery, eſpecially ſuch as have beene zealous propugners of the truth. Where began the firſt declenſion, where the firſt flaw? Had not their cõſciences firſt bruſht uponſome rocke? was not the firſt leake there? and when they had firſt put away good conſcience, then there was a ſpeedy baniſhing of truth, and a ready entertainment of errour. And for the common ſort of their converts, conſider if many times they have not beene the very riffe-raffe of our Church, ſwearers, groſſe profaners of the Sabbath vncleane and debauched drunkards, ſuch as our Church was ſicke of, and deſired even to ſpue forth, and then when they have become a prey to all vicious courſes, through want of conſcience, through Gods juſt judgement they have become a prey to *Romiſh Locuſts*, whoſe commiſſion is *only to hurt ſuch*, and not thoſe whom the ſap of a good conſcience keepes freſh and flouriſhing as the greene graſſe, and trees of the earth, *Apoc.* 9.4. For as *Salomon* ſpeakes of the bodily harlot, *Eccle.*7.26. ſo it is true of that ſpirituall Whore of Babylon. *Her heart is ſnares and nets, her hands as bands*, her delu-

reticorum deceptiones, Deo permittente cribratur, aut ventilatur à Satana: non veri ſancti, & garves, ſed improbi leves, curioſi, laſcivi ab Eccleſia avolantes ad Ethnicos hæreticoſue transfugiunt, nec fere ſolet accidere ut ante circa fidem aliquis naufraget, quam naufragere, cæperit circa mores. *Bellarm. Orat. prefix. tom.* 4.

deluſions ſtrong; *who ſo pleaſes God*, and hath a care to keepe a good conſcience *ſhall eſcape from her*; *but the ſinner*, and he that makes no conſcience of his wayes, *ſhall be taken by her.*

Well, let us thinke well upon this motive, we live in dangerous and declining dayes, wherein men with a greedineſſe turne to their Romiſh vomit againe. Beſides the Factors of Antichriſt are exceeding buſie and pragmaticall to draw men from the faith of Chriſt, and the Holy Ghoſt tels us they ſhall come with *ſtrong deluſions*. Now then all you that be the Lords people, ſave your ſelves from this dangerous generation, all you that have or would be knowne to *have the ſeale of God on your foreheads*, ſave your ſelves from the ſeduction of theſe *Locuſts*. I, but how may that be done? The deluſion is ſtrong, and it may be, we are weake. Lo then here is a remedy againſt their danger. Get, and keep, a good conſcience, live as *Paul* did, in all good conſcience, & thou ſhalt be ſafe from all their deluſiõs, *I have kept the faith*, ſayes *Paul*, oh! let it bee the care of us, that that may be our cloſing voice at our laſt day, and if we would *keep the faith*, let us *keep a good conſcience*;

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He that in his life time can ſay, *I keepe a good conſcience*, he at his death ſhall be able to ſay, *I have kept the faith*. Faith, and a good conſcience are both in a bottome. Hold one, and hold both.

As therefore thou wouldeſt feare to turne Papiſt, or any other Heretick; ſo, be ſure to hold a good conſcience, to hold on a good, honeſt, and a conſcionable man. So long as thou ſtandeſt upon that ground, thou art impregnable, and the gates of hel ſhall not be able to draw thee from the faith of the Lord Ieſus, *Prov.6* 20,22,24. *My Son, keep thy Fathers commandement, &c. And it will keep thee.* So I may ſay here, *keep a good conſcience*, and it will *keepe thee*, it will keepe thee ſound in the faith, it will keepe thee from being drawne away by the error of the wicked, and it will keepe thee from the Wine of the fornications of the Whore of *Babylon*.

Chap. XV.

The laſt Motive to a good conſcience; The miſery of an evill one.

THe laſt *Motive* remaines, and that is, The *horror* and *miſery* of an *evill* con-

The fift motive to a good conſcience.

Conſcience. If men did but truly know what the evill of an evill conſcience were, and how evill a thing, and bitter it will be when conſcience awakens here, or ſhall bee awakened in hell, a little perſwaſion ſhould ſerve to move men to live in a good conſcience. We may ſay of the evill conſcience, as *Solomon* ſpeakes of the drunkard, *Pro.* 23.29. *Who hath woe? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath wounds*, but not *without a cauſe?* Even the man whoſe conſcience is not good, even he that liues in an evill conſcience.

An evill conſcience, how miſerable it is, we may ſee by conſidering the miſerie thereof, either *in this world*, or the *world to come*.

1. *In this life.* When an evill conſcience is awakened in this life, the ſorrow and ſmart, the horror and terror is, as the joy of a good conſcience *unſpeakable*. An evil conſcience in this life is miſerable, in regard of *feare, perplexity, and torment*. To live in a continuall *feare*, and to have a mans heart alwaies in ſhaking fits of feare, is miſery of miſeries. And ſuch is the miſery of an evill conſcience. *Prov.* 28. 1. *The wicked flees when none purſues*. Onely his owne guilt purſues him, and makes him

him flee. His owne guilt cauſes a *ſound of feare in his eares, Iob* 15.21. Which makes him ſhake at the noiſe *of a ſhaken leafe, Levit.26.36.* yea, that ſo ſcares him that *terrours make him afraid on every ſide, and drive him to his feet, Iob* 18.11. Yea, *there are they in great feare where no feare is, Pſ.* 53.3. So that a man with an evill conſcience awakened, may be named as *Paſhur* is, *Ier.*20.3. *Magor-Miſſabib, feare round about*, as being a *terror to himſelfe*, and to *all his friends*, ver.4.

An evill conſcience, even makes thoſe feare fearefull feares, of whom all other ſtand in feare. How potent a Monarch, and how dreadfull a Prince was *Belſhazzar*, who was able to put him into any feare, whom all the earth feared? And yet when his guilty conſcience lookes him in the face, awakened by the palme writing on the wall, ſee where his courage is then, *Dan.* 5.6. *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joynts of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.* Who would have had his feare to have had his kingdome? Let him now cloath himſelfe with all his Majeſtie, let him looke and ſpeak as terribly as he can, let

Proprium autem eſt nocentium trepidare. Male de nobis actum erat, quod multa ſcelera legem & judicem effugiunt, & ſcripta ſupplicia niſi illa naturalia & gravia de preſentibus. ſolverent & in locum patientiæ timor cederet. *Senec. ep.* 91.

let him threaten the vileſt yaſſall in his Court, with all the tortures that tyranny can inflict, and let him try if he can for his heart put his pooreſt ſubject into that fright and feare that now his conſcience puts him into, in the ruffe, and middſt of his jollity. But I pray what ayles he to be in this feare, in this ſo extraordinary a feare? Hee can neither reade, nor underſtand the writing upon the wall. Indeed it threatned him the loſſe of his kingdome, but hee cannot reade his threatning, hee knowes not whether they be bitter things that God writes againſt him, why may he not hope that it may bee good which is written, and why may not this hope eaſe, and abate his feare? No, no. Though he cannot reade nor underſtand the writing, yet his guilty conſcience can comment ſhrewdly upon it, and can tell him it portends no good towards him. His conſcience now tells him of his godleſſe impieties, in profaning the veſſels of the Temple of the true God, and that for this his ſacrilegious impropriation, and abuſe of holy things, God is now come to reckon with him. Thus can his conſcience doe more than all his wiſe men. *All the wiſe men came in, but they could not reade the writing,*

writing, nor make knowne to the King the interpretation thereof. Dan. 5. 8. But his conſcience is wiſer than all his wiſe men, and when they are as puzzeld, that interprets to him, that this writing meanes him no good, and though he cannot reade the ſyllables, yet his conſcience gives a ſhrewd neere gueſſe at the ſubſtance of the writing; and therefore hence comes that extaſie of feare, and thoſe paroxyſmes of horror.

It was better with *Adam* after his fall. After his Sin committed, we find him in a great feare, *Gen.*3.8,10. and hee hides himſelfe for feare. Now obſerve how his feare is deſcribed from the circumſtance of the time. *They heard the voyce of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the coole of the day. Luther* layes the *Emphaſis* of the aggravation of his feare, upon this word, *the wind or coole of the day.* The night indeeed is naturally terrible; and darkneſſe is fearfull, whence that phraſe, *Pſ.*91. *The terrors of the night.* But the day and the light, is a cheerfull and a comfortable creature, *Ec.*11.7. *Truly the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.* How is it then that in the faire day light, which gives courage and

Gravis mala conſcientiæ, luxeſt. *Senec. ep.* 123.

comfort, that *Adam* feares, and runs into the thickets? Oh, his conſcience was become evill, and full of darkneſſe, and the darkneſſe of his conſcience turned the very light into darkneſſe, and ſo turned the comforts of the day into the terrours of the night. So that in this ſenſe it may be ſaid of an evill conſcience, which of the Lord is ſaid in another, *Pſ.* 139. 12. Vnto *it the darkneſſe, and the light are both alike.* As full of feare in the light as in the dark. And beſides, the Lord came but in a gentle wind, the coole breath of the day, now what a ſmall matter is a coole wind, and that in the day time to, to put a man in a feare? Such ſmall things breed great feares in evill conſciences. In what a wofull plight would *Adam* (thinke we) have beene, if the Lord had come to him, at the dead, and darke midde-night with earth-quakes, thunder, and bluſtring tempeſt?

We may ſee the like in *Cain*. After he had defiled his conſcience with his brothers blood, in what feares, yea, what idle feares lived hee? Hee is ſo haunted with feares, that though he had lived in Paradice, yet had he lived in a land of *Nod*, in a land of *agitation*, yea, of trepidation.

Iudg

Iudge what caſe his evill conſcience made him in, by that ſpeech, *Gen.* 4. 14. *It ſhall come to paſſe, that every one that finds me ſhall ſlay me.* Surely there could not bee many yet in the world, and thoſe that were in the world, were either his parents, brethren, ſiſters, or neere kindred, his feare ſeemes to imagine multitudes of people that might meete him, yea, and that every one hee meets would murther him. What, will his Father or Mother be his executioners? What if any of his ſiſters meet him, ſhal they ſlay him? is not ſuch a ſwaſh-buckler as he, able to make good his party with them? Lo what fearfull, and terrible things a guilty conſcience projects.

As an evill conſcience is miſerable in its *feares*, ſo in thoſe *perplexities* which this feare breeds. Theſe perplexities doe miſerably and reſtleſſely diſtract a man. *Iſay.* 57. 20. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt.* What is the reaſon of theſe troubleſome perplexities? The want of peace of a good conſcience, *verſe* 21. *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The winds make the ſea reſtleſſe, and ſtirre it to the very bot-

tome, ſo as the waters caſt up mire and dirt. See in the troubled Sea, the Emblem of a troubled conſcience.

But the *Torment* exceeds all, and the maine miſery of an evill conſcience lies in that. It is a miſery to be in feare, a miſery to have inward turbulencie, and commotions, but to be alwayes on the racke, alwayes on the Strapado, this is far more truly the ſuburbs of Hell, than is the Popiſh purgatory. Oh! the gripes, and girds, the ſtitches, and twitches, the throwes, and pangs of a galling, and a guilty conſcience. So ſore they are, and ſo unſufferable, that *Iudas* ſeeks eaſe with an halter, and thinks hanging eaſe in compariſon of the torture of his evill conſcience. All the racks, wheeles, wild horſes, hot pincers, ſcalding leade powred into the moſt tender, and ſenſible parts of the body, yea, all the mercileſſe, barbarous, and inhumane cruelties of the *holy houſe*, are but flea-bitings, meere toyes, and May-games, compared with the torment that an evill conſcience wil put a man to, when it is awakened. It is no wonder that *Iudas* hangs himſelfe, it had been a great wonder rather if he had not hangd himſelfe.

Poena autem vehemens, & multo ſevior illis. Quas & Cedicius gravis inveni & Radamanthus. Nonne diequé ſiem geſtare in pectore teſtem. *Iuvenal. Sat. 13.*

The Heathen fabled terrible things of their

their helliſh *furies*, with their ſnakes and fiery torches, vexing and tormenting hainous, and great offenders. Theſe their *furies* were nothing elſe, but the helliſh torments of guilty conſcience, wherewith wicked perſons were continually haunted, as ſome of the wiſer of themſelves have well obſerved. All ſnakes and torches are but idle toyes, and meere trifles, to the moſt exquiſite torment of a guilty and accuſing conſcience.

The ſting of conſcience is worſe than death it ſelfe, *Apoc.9.5,6. Their torment was as the torment of a Scorpion when hee ſtrikes a man; And in thoſe dayes ſhall men ſeeke death, and ſhall not find it, and ſhall deſire to dye, and death ſhall flee from them.* Popiſh ones tormented in their conſciences by the terrible and uncomfortable doctrines of ſatisfactions, Purgatory fire, &c. which thoſe *Locuſts* doe ſo terrifie them withall, ſhould rather chuſe death, than live in ſuch an uncomforta'le condition: *The ſting of death* not ſo ſmart, as the *ſting of a Scorpion* in the conſcience. The ſting of an accuſing conſcience, is like an Harlot, *Pro.7.26. More bitter than death.* And as *Salomon* there ſpeaks of the Harlot, ſo may it be ſaid of a tormenting

Nolite enim putare quē admodum in fabulis ſæpenumero videtis, eos qui aliquid impie ſceleratequecō miſerint agitari & perterrori furiarum tædis ardentibus. Sua quemque fraus, & ſuus terror maximè vexat, ſuumquē que ſcelus agitat amentiaque afficit. Suæ malæ cogitationes, conſcientiæque animi terrent. Hæ ſunt impiis aſſiduæ, domeſticæq; furiæ, quæ dies noctesque parentum pœnas à conſceleratiſſimis filiis repetant *Cicero pro Roſc. Amer.*

Suum quemque facinus, ſuum ſcelus, ſua audacia de ſanitate, ac mente deturbat Hæc ſunt impiorum furiæ, flammæ, hæ faces. *Idem. L. Piſon.*

conſcience, Who ſo pleaſes God ſhall e-
ſcape from it, but the ſinner ſhall be ta-
ken by it.

Gods deare children themſelves, many
of them are not freed from trouble in
their conſciences, but they have their hels
in this life, *Ion.* 2.2. *Out of the belly of hell I
cryed unto thee.* God for their triall ſpeaks
bitter things unto them, and not only de-
nies them peace, but cauſes their conſci-
ences to be at war with them. Now when
God puts his owne children to theſe tri-
als, and diſquiets of conſcience, they are
ſo bitter, and ſo biting, that had they not
the grace of God to uphold and preſerve
them, even they could not be ſaved from
dangerous miſcarriage. *Iob* was put to
this triall, and his conſcience apprehen-
ded Gods anger, and we ſhall ſee what a
caſe he was in, *Iob* 6. 8,9. *O that I might
have my requeſt, and that God would grant
me the thing I long for, even that it would
pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that hee would let
looſe his hands, and cut me off.* Nay, worſe
Iob 14.15. *Thou ſcareſt me with dreames, &
terrifieſt me through viſions, ſo that my ſoul
chooſes ſtrangling, and death rather than
life.* Gods grace preſerves his Saints from
ſelfe-murther, but yet not alwayes from
im-

impatient wiſhes; *Iob* wiſhes *ſtrangling* and chuſes it of the two, but goes no further. What wonder then that *Iudas* doth ſtrangle himſelfe, when his conſcience ſtares him in the face, when as *Iob*, with whom God is but in jeſt in compariſon, *chuſes ſtrangling*. If *Iob* wiſh it, what wonder that *Iudas* doth the deed. Conſcience doth chaſtiſe the godly but wth whips, but it laſhes the wicked with ſcorpions. Now if the whips be ſo ſmarting to *Iob*, as makes him *chuſe ſtrangling*, what wonder that the ſcorpions be ſo cutting, as makes *Iudas* ſeek reliefe at an halter.

Yea, and that which addes to the miſery of an evill conſcience, being awakned, it is ſuch a miſery as no earthly comfort can aſſwage or mitigate. Diſeaſes and diſtempers of the body though they bee terrible, yet Phyſick, ſleep, and reſt upon a mans bed, yields him ſome eaſe, and ſome comfort. Sometime in ſome griefes the cõfortable uſe of the creatures, yields a man ſome refreſhments, *Prov.* 31. 6, 7. *Give wine unto thoſe that be of heauy hearts, let him drinke, and forget his poverty, and remember his miſery no more.* But conſcience being diſquieted, finds no eaſe in theſe. *Darius* againſt his conſcience

ſuffers innocent *Daniel* to be caſt into the Lyons den. What cheere hath hee that night? *He paſſed the night in faſting*, *Dan.* 6.18. Not in faſting, in humiliation for his Sin, but conſcience now began to gall him, and hee having marred the feaſt of his conſcience, conſcience alſo marres his feaſting, none of his dainties will now downe, his wine is turned into gall and wormewood, no joy now in any thing. He had marred the muſick of his conſcience, and now he brookes not other muſicke. *The Inſtruments of muſicke were not brought before him.* His guilty conſcience was now awakened, and now he cannot ſleepe; *His ſleepe went from him.* So *Iob* in his conflict for conſcience hoped for eaſe in his bed, *Iob* 7.13. *My bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint.* But how was it with him? Either he could not ſleep at all, *ver.* 3.4. *Weariſome nights are appointed unto me. When I lye downe, I ſay, when ſhal I ariſe, and the night be gone? and I am full of toſſing to and fro unto the dawning of the day.* Needs muſt he toſſe, whoſe conſcience is like the Sea waves toſſed with the winds, or elſe if *Iob* did ſleepe, yet did not conſcience ſleepe, *ver.* 14. but even in his ſleepe preſented him

with

with ghaſtly ſights and viſions, *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, then thou ſcareſt me with dreames, and terrifieſt mee through viſions.*

At other times when conſcience hath beene good, Gods people though their dangers have beene great, yet neither the greatneſſe, nor neerneſſe of their dangers have broken their ſleepe, *Pſ.* 3.5.7. *I laid me downe and ſlept, I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of people that have ſet themſelves againſt mee round about.* And yet if wee looke to the title of the Pſalme, *A Pſalm of David when he fled from Abſolom his Son*; one would thinke *David* ſhould have had little liſt, or leaſure to have ſlept. *Peter* thought to have been executed the next morrow by *Herod*, & though hee alſo lodged betweene a company of ruffianly ſoldiers, that happily one would feare might have done him ſome miſchiefe in his ſleep, yet how ſoundly ſleeps he that night, *Act.* 12. And holy *Bradford* was found a ſleepe, when they came to fetch him to be burnt at the ſtake. Theſe feares brake not theſe mens ſleepe. How might this come to paſſe? They did as *Pſ.* 4.8. *I will lay me downe in peace and ſleep.* He that can lie downe in the *peace* of conſcience,

ſcience, may *ſleepe* ſoundly, whatſoever cauſes of feare there be otherwiſe. But contrarily, he that cannot ly downe with the peace of conſcience, will find but little reſt and ſleepe, though his heart bee free from all other feares. Evill conſcience being awakened, will fill the heart with ſuch feares, as a man ſhall have little liberty to ſleep. Oh the ſweet ſleep that *Iacob* had, and the ſweet dreame, when he lay upon the cold earth, and had an hard ſtone under his head for his pillow. An hard lodging, and an hard pillow, but yet ſweet reſt, and ſweet communion with God. A good conſcience makes any lodging ſoft and eaſie; but downe-beds, and down-pillowes, if there be thornes in the conſcience, are but beds of thornes, and beds of nettles. The bitterneſſe of an evill conſcience diſtaſtes all the ſweets of this life, as when the mouth and tongue is furred in an hot Ague, all meates and drinks are bitter to the ſicke party. This is the miſery of an evil conſcience awakened in this life.

2. But it may be many never feele this miſery here, there is therefore the more miſery reſerved for them in hell, in the world to come. Indeed more by many thou-

thouſands go to hell like *Nabal*, than like *Iudas*; more die like ſots in *Security*, than in *deſpaire* of conſcience. Death it ſelfe cannot awaken ſome conſciences, but no ſooner come they into hel, but conſcience is there awakened to the full, never to ſleep more; and then ſhe laſhes and gaſhes to the quick, and lets men learne that forbearance was no payment. Tel many men of conſcience, and they are ready to ſlap one on the mouth with that profane proverbe, *Tuſh, conſcience was hanged many yeares agoe.* But the time will come, that they who have lived in evill conſcience, ſhall find the conſcience which they have counted hanged, ſhall play the cruell hangman, and tormentor with them. They ſhall find conſcience unhanged, when it ſhall hang them up in hell, when day and night it ſhall ſtretch them there upon the racke.

The torments which an evill conſcience puts the damned to in hell, are beyond the expreſſion of the tongue, and the comprehenſion of mans conceit. There be two ſpeciall things in the torments of Hell, wee have them both thrice repeated together, *Mark.* 9. 44, 46, 48. *Where their* worme *dies not, and the* fire *is not* quen-

quenched. There is an ever-living *worme*, and never-dying *fire.* And marke that in all the three verſes the *worme* is ſet in the firſt place, as it were to teach us, that the prime and principal torment in hell is the *worme*, rather than the *fire.* And what is the *worme*, but the guilt of an evill conſcience, that ſhall lye eternally gnawing and graſping, twitching, and griping, the heart of the damned in hell? Men talke much of hell fire, and it were well they would talke more of it; but yet there is another torment forgotten, that would be thought on too. There is an *Hell worm*, as well as there is an *Hell fire.* And it may be a queſtion whether of the two is the greateſt torment. And yet no great queſtion neither. For as the Heaven of Heauen, is the peace and joy of a good, ſo the very Hell of Hell, is the guilt and and worme of an evill conſcience. A man may ſafely ſay, it is better being in hell with a good conſcience, than to be in heaven, if that might be, with an evill one. Heaven without a good conſcience, what is it better than hel? Paradice was an heaven on earth, but when *Adam* had loſt the Paradice of a good conſcience, what joy did paradice, & the pleaſures of the gardē afford

afford him more, than if he had beene in ſome ſad and ſolitary Deſert? A good conſcience makes a Deſert a Paradice, an evill one turnes a Paradice into a Deſert. A good conſcience makes Hell to be no Hell, and an evil one makes Heaven to be no Heaven. Both the happines, and miſery of Heaven and Hell, are from the inward frame of the conſcience. The Hell of Hell, is the worm of Hell, and that worm is the worm of an evill conſcience, which if it be not wormed out, and ſo the conſcience in this life made good, it will be an immortall worme in Hell.

The helliſh deſpaire wherewith the damned are overwhelmed, comes rather from this *worm*, than from the *fire*. Whoſe *worm* dies not, and whoſe *fire* is not quenched. The *fire* of Hell never quenches, becauſe the *worme* of Hell never dies. If the *worme* of Hell would die, the *fire* of Hell would go out. For if there were no guilt, there ſhould be no puniſhment. So that the very Hell of Hell, is that ſelf-torment which an evill conſcience breeds.

Now then all this conſidered, how powerfully ſhould it move us to labour for a good conſcience. Thou that goeſt on in thine evill courſes, and hateſt to be refor-

reformed and reclamed, do but bethinke thy ſelfe, if God ſhould awaken thy conſcience, in what miſery thou ſhouldſt live here, what an hell to have a palſie conſcience? what a hell on earth to be alwayes under the accuſations, inditements, and terrors of conſcience, and to live *Cain*-like in the land of *Nod*, in a continuall reſtleſſe agitation.

But eſpecially as thou feareſt that everliving and ever grabbing worme, ſo have a care to get a good conſcience. Greene & raw fruits breed Cheſtworms, which if heed be not taken, will eare the very maw thorow. A dead body and a putrified corrupt carcaſſe, breeds worms that ly gnawing at it in the grave. The forbidden and raw fruits of Sin are thoſe which breed Cheſtwormes in the conſcience. The corruptions of the ſoule, and dead workes are thoſe that breed this living worme, take heed therfore of medling with theſe fruits that will breed this worme, and get thy conſcience purged from dead works, get this worme killed with the ſooneſt, for if thou letteſt it live till thou dye, it will never die at all, and will put thee to thoſe exquiſite torments, from which to be freed, thou wouldſt willing-

Vt ex crudi-tate febres naſcuntur, & vermes quãdo quis cibum ſumit intemperanter, ita ſi quis peccata peccatis accumulet, nec deoo quot ea pœnetentia, ſed miſceat peccata peccatis, cruditatem contrahit veterum & recentium delictorum igne aduretur proprio, & vermibus conſumetur. Ignis eſt quẽ generat mœſtitia delictorum, vermis eſt eo quod irrationabilis animi peccata, mentem pungunt, & viſcera exedant, vermes ex unoque naſcuntur tanquam ex corpore peccatoris, hic vermis non morietur, &c. *Ambr. lib. 7. in Luk. c. 14.*

willingly ſuffer ten thouſand of the moſt cruell deaths that the wit of man were able to invent.

As then I ſay thou feareſt this *worme* of Hell, ſo get a good conſcience. Drink downe every morning a hearty draught of Chriſts blood, which may make this worme burſt. And when once this worm is burſt and voyded, and the conſcience well purged by Chriſts blood, take heed ever after of eating thoſe raw fruits that will breed new wormes. Lead ſo holy, ſo upright, and ſo conſcionable a life, that thou mayeſt not by thy freſh Sins clog thy conſcience with freſh guilt. Get thy conſcience purged by Chriſts blood, and thy converſation framed by Gods Word. *Thy words were found by me, and I did eate them, Ier.* 15, 16. Do thou ſo, eat no more the unwholeſome and worme-breeding fruits of Sin; but *drinke* Chriſts blood, and *eate* Gods Word, and they both ſhall purifie and ſcoure thy conſcience from all ſuch ſtuffe, as may breed and feed the Hell-worme of an evill conſcience.

CHAP.

Chap. XVI.

The portion and reſpect that a good conſcience finds in the world.

And thus have we hitherto ſeen *Pauls Proteſtation.* The ſecond point followes, namely, *Ananias* his inſolent and impetuous *Injunction.* Verſe 2. *And the high Prieſt Ananias commanded them that ſtood by him, to ſmite him on the mouth.*

Paul had begun his defence in the former verſe, and that by authoritie and ſpeciall command, as appeares in the former Chapter, at the 30. ver. But he had no ſooner begun, but he is interrupted & cut off, and hath not onely his mouth ſtopt, but ſtopt with *Ananias* fiſt. *He commanded to ſmite him on the mouth.* Out of which carriage and violence of his, wee may obſerve divers things. Firſt learne;

What is the *Reward and portion of a good conſcience from the world.* It is the portion of a good conſcience full oft to be ſmitten, either on the mouth, or with the mouth. Blowes, either with the fiſt, or with the tongue. *To be ſmitten* one way or other, is full often the lot of a good conſcience. *Smite him on the mouth,* ſayes

Ananias

Ananias. But let us a little expoſtulate the matter with *Ananias*. *Smite him on the mouth?* But yet as *Pilate* ſpeaks in Chriſts caſe, *But what evill hath he done?* or what evill hath hee ſpoken? *Smite him on the mouth?* But as our Saviour anſwers, *Ioh.* 18.23. *If he have ſpoken evil, take witneſſe of the evill*, and proceed legally and formally: *If he have ſpoken well*, or no manner of evill, *why commandeſt thou him to be ſmitten?* What, hath he ſpoken any treaſon againſt *Cæſar*, or the Roman government? If he have, then as the town-clark of *Epheſus* ſpeaks, *Act.* 19.38. *The Law is open, and there are Deputies*, let them accuſe him; and bring him to his anſwer. It is a baſe uſage of an ingenuous perſon, to be ſmitten on the mouth in a Court of Iuſtice, a diſhonourable uſage of a Roman. Surely it ſhould ſeeme by ſuch baſe and bitter uſage, that *Paul* hath ſome way or other fouly forgotten and overſhot himſelfe, that *Ananias* his ſpirit is thus embittered and provoked againſt him. What, hath *Paul* given him any exaſperating and diſgracefull termes, hath he given him any open and perſonall girds, before the whole Councell? No, no: No ſuch matter at all. Why what then is the matter

that *Paul* muſt be thus baſely, and thus deſpitefully uſed? Will ye know the cauſe? *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conſcience?* Loe here is the quarrell. He hath made a profeſſion of a good conſcience, and for his good conſcience ſake are *Ananias* fiſts about his eares. There is nothing ſo mads men of wicked conſciences, as the profeſſion & practice of a good conſcience doth. The very name & mention of a good conſcience makes *Ananias* halfe mad, & like one beſides himſelfe he fals not onely to foule words, but to blowes alſo, and *Paul* muſt have it on the mouth for good conſcience ſake.

Paul might have blaſphemed the bleſſed name of Chriſt, and rayled upon the odious Sect of the Nazarens, hee might have beene a drunkard, an adulterour, or a murtherer, and none of all theſe things would have ſtirred *Ananias* his blood, for none of all theſe ſhould *Paul* have been ſmitten; but let him but once ſpeak, or treate of, or any way meddle with good conſcience, and *Ananias* his blood is preſently up, hee cannot hold his hands, but *Paul* muſt have on the mouth, there is no remedy. So odious a thing is good conſcience and the profeſſion of it

it to wicked men. Therefore this is that which a good cõſciẽce muſt expect, even *Ananias* his dole, fiſts, blowes, ſmiting hard & injurious meaſure from the world.

This is no new thing. It was our Saviours caſe before it was *Pauls*, *Ioh.* 18. 22. *And when he had thus ſpoken, one of the officers which ſtood by ſtrucke Ieſus with the palme of his hand, &c.* Lu. 22. 63, 64. *And the men that held Ieſus, mocked him, and ſmote him, And when they had blind-folded him, they ſtroke him on the face.* He felt the weight of their fiſts for the ſame quarrell that *Paul* did. So it was fore-prophecied of him, *Iſa.* 50. 6. *I gave my backe to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the haire.* It was the kindneſſe that *Zidkiah* could afford *Micaiah*, 1 *King.* 22. 24. *He went neere, and ſmote him on the cheeke*; & it was the thanks the Prophet was like to have for the diſcharge of a good conſcience, 1 *Chr.* 25. 16. *Forbear, why ſhouldſt thou be ſmitten?* It is that of which *Iob* cõplained ſo long ſince, *Iob* 16. 10. *Mine enemie ſharpens his eyes upon me, they have gaped upon me with the mouth, they have ſmitten me upon the cheeke reproachfully.*

The ſame portion ſhall the Prophet *Ieremy* meet withall, *Ier.* 20. 2. *Then Paſhur*

ſmote Ieremiah the Prophet. What was the quarrell? That in the former verſ. *Hee heard that Ieremiah had prophecied theſe things*. Only for diſcharging his conſcience, for the conſcionable diſpenſation of Gods truth. And as ſometime they ſmote him on the mouth, ſo ſomtime they ſmote him with the mouth, *Ier*. 18. 18. *Come let us deviſe devices againſt Ieremiah, come let us ſmite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words*. And why would they ſmite him with the tongue? Onely for his conſcience, and fidelity in his Miniſtery.

There is mention made of two falſe Prophets, againſt whom an heavie judgment is threatned, *Ier*. 29. 21, 23. *Ahab* & *Zedekiah*, two baſe ſcandalous debauched perſons, who *committed villany in Iſrael, and committed adultery with their neighbors wives*. The Prophet *Ieremy* he out of conſcience fulfils his Miniſtry, & ſee how light-fingred *Paſhur* is, he hath fiſts for *Ieremies* face, and ſtocks for his heeles; but in the meane time *Ahab* & *Zedekiah* they may whore, & play the villains, and they feele not the weight of his little finger. If his fingers muſt needs be walking, there is worke for them, there he may ſtrike, and ſtocke

ſtocke with credit. But there is no ſuch zeale againſt them. No ſuch dealing with them. *Zedekiah* and *Ahab* may be in good tearmes of grace with *Paſhur*, whilſt *Ieremiah* muſt have blowes on the face, & ly by the heeles. So well can wicked men brook villany, and any wretched courſes better than they can a good conſcience: *Paſhur* can better endure an aduletrous whoremaſter, than an honeſt conſciona-ble Prophet: villaines may walk at liberty, whilſt a good conſcience ſhal ſit in the ſtocks. Heere then is the portion a good conſcience may look for from the world. The better conſcience, the harder meaſure. *For which of my good works do ye ſtone me?* ſaith our Saviour, *Ioh.* 10. 32. A ſtrange recompence for good works, and yet oft-times the beſt recompence and reward that the world can afford good works, and a good conſcience, ſtones and ſtrokes. And if ſo be that feare of law, and happy government bind their hands, yet then will they bee ſmiting with the tongue: and if the law keep them in awe for ſmiting on the mouth, yet then will they do what they dare, they will ſmite with the mouth.

A faire Item to all that meane to under- *Vſe* 1.

take the profeſſion and courſes of good cõſcience. Do as many do in caſe of marriage, before they affect the perſon, they firſt conſider how they like the portion. So heere before thou meddle with good conſcience, thinke with thy ſelfe what is her portion, and if thou like not that, it is but a folly to think of a good conſcience. Do as our Saviour adviſes, *Luk.* 14.28. Sit down firſt & count the coſt, and whether thou be able to endure that coſt or no. *Ananias* hath a fierce ſpirit, and a foule heavie fiſt, *Paſhur* is a club fiſted fellow, and the ſpitting adders of the world will ſmite their ſting deepe. Suppoſe a good conſcience may ſpeed better, as having the protection of Chriſtian government, yet this it muſt reckon upon, and it muſt account of the hardeſt. Therfore think before hād before you meddle with it, how you can beare the fiſts and blowes of ſmiters if ever you ſhould come under them.

I may ſay here as our Saviour did to the Sons of *Zebedeus*, *Mat.* 20.20,21. *Ye know not what ye aske. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I ſhall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptiſme that I am baptized with?* Many ſay they deſire to enter the courſes of a good conſcience, but doe not

well know, nor well weigh what they deſire. Conſider with your ſelves, Are ye able to drink of the cup that a good conſcience ſhall drinke of? Can ye be baptized with the baptiſme that a good conſcience muſt be baptized with? Can ye indure the ſmart of *Ananias* blows? Can ye bear the load of *Paſhurs* club fiſt? Think upon this aforehand, and weigh it well, this is that you muſt make account of, that will ſet upon the courſes of a good conſcience.

Is this the portion of a good cõſcience? *Vſe 2.* ſee then what a good meaſure of Chriſtian reſolution they ſhall need to have, that take the profeſſion of it upon them. Be ſhod with the ſhoos of the preparation of the Goſpel, *Eph.6.15.* Grow marveilous reſolute to harden thy ſelf, and to harden thy face againſt all enemies fiſts, & blows whatſoever, that though *Ananias* ſhould daſh thee on the face, yet he might not daſh thee and thy good conſcience out of Countenance. Thus did our Saviour, *Iſ.* 50. 6. *I gave my backe to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the haire, I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.* But how was hee ever able to endure all this? See *verſ.* 7. *I have ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſha-*

med. So muſt thou doe that meaneſt to keepe a good conſcience. Get a face, and a fore-head of flint, that enemies may as ſoone cracke a flint with their knuckles, as by their violence and injuries drive thee from a good conſcience. Get an *Ezekiels* face, *Ezek.*3.9. Make thy forehead as an Adamant harder than a flint. Steele, and flint thy face with all heroicall reſolution. A face of fleſh will never endure, but a face of flint will hold *Ananias* fiſt tacke, let him ſtrike while he will, he ſhall ſooner batter a flint with his fiſt, than ſtir a reſolved conſcience out of its ſtation.

Queſt. But believe me, theſe be hard things to undergo, who will be able to abide ſuch hard meaſure, how therefore may one grow to ſuch reſolution, to abide the worlds fiſts, & the ſmart of their ſmiting?

Anſw. 1. Conſider that conſcience hath fiſts as well as *Ananias*, 1 *Sam.*24.5. & 2 *Sam.* 24.10. *Davids heart ſmote him.* And what are *Ananias* his blowes on the face, to the blowes of conſcience at the heart? One blow on the heart, or with the heart, is more painefull than an hundred on the face, and as *Rehoboam* ſpeaks of himſelfe, 1 *King.*12.10. ſo conſciences little finger is thicker, heavier, and more intollerable than

than both *Ananias* his hands and loynes. Now then here is the caſe. If *Paul* will ſtand to his conſcience, then *Ananias* his fiſts will be about his eares. If *Paul* do forſake or flawe good conſcience for feare, or for the favour of *Ananias*, then will conſciences fiſt be about his heart. Now then if no remedy but a man muſt have blowes, it is good wiſedome to chuſe the lighteſt fiſt, and the ſofter hand, and to take the blow on that part that is beſt able to beare it with moſt eaſe. The face is better able to abide blows than the heart, and *Ananias* his blowes are but fillips to the clubbing blowes of conſcience. We would ſcarce judge him a wiſe man, that to avoyd a cuffe on the eare, would put himſelfe under the danger of a blow with a club. Here is that then that may make us to compoſe our ſelves to patience, and to grow to an hardineſſe and a Chriſtian reſolution. Better ten blowes on the face, than one on the heart. Better an hundred from *Ananias*, than one from conſcience, that will lay on load; let the world ſmite, yet mine heart ſmites not, yea, that ſtrokes and comforts, whilſt the world ſtrikes and threatens. Therfore being ſmitten in caſe of conſcience, rather than give out, do as our

our Saviour bids in another caſe, *Math.* 5. 39. *Whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheeke turne to him the other alſo.*

2. Conſider that in the next verſe, *God ſhall ſmite thee.* God hath ſmiting fiſts as well as *Ananias.* Let him ſmite, but yet there will come a time that God ſhall ſmite him: God will call ſmiters to a reckoning.

3. Conſider that of *David, Pſal.* 3. 7. *Thou haſt ſmitten all mine enemies upon the cheeke bone, thou haſt broken the teeth of the ungodly.* God will not onely ſmite the enemies of his people, but will ſmite them with diſgrace, as it is a matter of vile diſgrace to have a boxe on the cheeke, and hee will give them ſuch a *duſt* on the mouth as ſhall daſh out their very teeth; he will lay heavie and diſgracefull judgements upon them, as he did upon *Abſolom*, of whom *David* ſpeakes.

May it ever be thy lot to ſee good conſcience under the fiſts of ſmiters, be not diſcouraged, ſtart not, ſtumble not at it. Bee not ready to inferre; It is in vaine to cleanſe a mans conſcience, and waſh his hands in innocencie. But conſider, that this hath been ever the worlds madneſſe, and the ancient lot of a good conſcience, either

either to bee ſmitten with adverſaries hands, or varlets tongues.

Chap. XVII.

The impetuous injuſtice, and malice of the adverſaries of a good conſcience.

AS we have ſeene the entertainment a good conſcience meets withall in the world, ſo we may here further ſee the inordinat violences that the enemies and haters of a good conſcience are carried with. Therefore out of this inſolent Injunction of *Ananias*, we may in the ſecond place obſerve:

Doct. 2. *The heady violence, and impetuous injuſtice of the adverſaries of good conſcience.* *Smite him on the mouth.* A man would not imagine that hatred and malice againſt goodneſſe, ſhould ſo tranſport a man as to make him run into ſo much, ſo open, ſo groſſe Injuſtice. Doe but examine the fact, and you ſhall ſee a ſtrange deale of injuſtice therein.

1. *Who is he that bids ſmite?* The high Prieſt. He had a better Canon to live by, *Mal.* 2. 6. *He walked with me in peace and equity.* So *Levi* walked, & ſo ſhould Gods Prieſts

Prieſts walke alſo. And that Canon of *Paul* for the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, held no leſſe good for the Miniſtry of the law, That he ſhould *not be ſoone angry, no ſtriker, Tit.* 1. 7. How haps it then that the High Prieſt is thus light fingred. *Smite him on the mouth?* Oh! ſhame that ſuch a word ſhould come out of a Prieſts, eſpecially the High Prieſts mouth.

2. *Who muſt be ſmitten? Paul* an Innocent. Foule injuſtice. Queſtionleſſe if *Paul* had offered ſuch meaſure but to *Ananias* his dog, to have ſmitten him for nothing, but out of his meer ſpight, *Ananias* would have judged him a dogged fellow. And would *Ananias* uſe an innocēt perſon as he would be loth a man ſhould uſe his dog?

3. *Where muſt this blow be given?* In open Court, where they were all convened to doe juſtice. Still the worſe. If he had commanded him to have been ſmitten in his private Parlour, it had been unjuſtifiable, but to ſmite him in open Court, and to doe injuſtice in the place of Iuſtice, this is deepe injuſtice. The place he ſate in, the gravity of his perſon, Gods High Prieſt, the ſolemnity of the adminiſtration of juſtice, all theſe might have manacled his hands, and have a little tempered and bridled

dled his ſpirit. A foule indignity for the *Iudge of Iſrael to bee ſmitten on the cheeke, Mic.*5.1. As foule an iniquity for a Iudge of *Iſrael* to ſmite on the mouth wrongfully, and in an open Court of Iuſtice. What an indecent thing for a Iudge to goe to cuffes on the Bench? What an intemperate and a vindictive ſpirit argues it? But what is the Indency to the Injuſtice? And what Injuſtice to that which was done upon the Bench? Of all wormwood that is the moſt bitter, into which juſtice is turned.

4. *For what is the blow given?* For a good conſcience. What? And hath Gods High Prieſt no more conſcience than ſo, his place teaches him to bee a Protector, Defender, and an Incourager of good conſcience. His whole office is matter of conſcience, and will he that ſhould teach, maintaine, and incourage good conſcience, will he ſmite men for good conſcience? What is this but *Iſ.*58.4. *To ſmite with the fiſt of wickednesſe?*

5. *When is the blow given?* When he is begining to plead his own innocencie, & to ſpeake in his own defence. More injuſtice yet. Did not *Nicodemus* ſpeake reaſon, *Ioh.*7.51. *Doth our Law judge any man before*

before it heare him? Nay, if *Ananias* have no regard to Gods Law, as it ſeemes hee hath but a little, that will ſmite a man for good conſcience, yet what will he ſay to *Cæſars* Law? *Act.* 18.25. *Is it lawfull for you to ſcourge*, and ſo to ſmite, *a man that is a Roman and uncondemned*, and unheard? To judge and condemne a man unheard, is deep Injuſtice, but far deeper to puniſh, and execute him. Will hee hang a man, and then try him? Lo here indeed a right unrighteous Iudge, that feares neither God, nor man, that regards neither Gods Law, nor *Cæſars*.

To have done by *Paul* as *Gallio* did, *Act.* 18.14,16. When *Paul* was about to open his mouth, to drive him and the reſt from the judgement-ſeat, this had beene injuſtice, but when *Paul* opens his mouth to ſpeake for himſelf, for *Ananias* to ſtop his mouth, and to ſtop it with his fiſts, to ſtop his mouth, and ſmite him on the mouth both, when he was to ſpeake in his owne defence, what greater depth of Injuſtice can we imagine? An hundred to one but *Ananias* was one of the *Sanhedrim*, which at the time when the officers not having apprehended Chriſt, fell a curſing the people, *Ioh.* 7.49. *This people that knowes*

not

not the Law is curſed. Vpon which ſpeech *Nicodemus* ſeemes to meet kindly with them, *ver.* 51. *Doth our Law judge any man before it heare and know what he doth?* As if he had ſaid, Do you glory in the knowledge of the law, and are they curſed that know not the law, what then are they that knowing the Law goe directly againſt it? are the people, *Ananias*, curſed that know not the Law, what art thou thy ſelfe then who knowſt both Gods Law and *Cæſars*, and yet through malice againſt *Paul* ſinneſt againſt both? Vnjuſt and malicious proceedings, God will not let them have the honor ſo much as of the colour of formality, and legality in their courſes. But they ſhall be ſo carried, that the madneſſe and malice of them, may ly manifeſtly open to the view of all the world.

6. *By what authority is the blow given?* *Ananias* commanded them. Yea but *Mal.* 2.7. *The Prieſts lips ſhould preſerve knowledge, and they ſhould ſeeke the Law at his mouth.* And ſhould they that ſhould ſeeke the Law at his mouth, againſt all law at his command, ſmite men on the mouth? It was too much that *Gallio* did, and the holy Ghoſt leaves a deep diſgrace upon him for it, *Act.* 18, that he would ſuffer others

to

to ſmite *Soſthenes*, and *not to care for it.* It was too much that *Ahab* ſuffers *Zidkiah* to ſmite *Micaiah*, and to breake the kings peace in the kings preſence, hee ſhould have condemned him at leaſt to loſe his hand, for ſtriking before the King. But here is a worſe matter, he not only ſuffers it, but commands it to be done. *Ananias commanded* to ſmite. Vnjuſtice *ſuffered* by authority is too much, but unjuſtice *commanded* by authority, that is far worſe.

It ſhewes the truth of *Pauls* phraſe, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2. *Vnreaſonable men*, or *abſurd* men. Malice againſt the truth and the Goſpel, ſo hurries adverſaries, that it tranſports them beyond all bounds of common equitie, common honeſtie, the gravity of their perſons, and places; ſo as neither Law of God, nor law of man can reſtraine their violence, and impetuouſneſſe. No bounds can keepe a malicious ſpirit within compaſſe. It makes men forget common civility, and carries men beyond all *Decorum*, even that *Decorum* their place and office cals for. *Bonner* cannot content himſelfe to judge, and condemne Gods ſervants to the fire, it ſatisfies him not to be their judge, but hee muſt be taking the Beadles, or the Hangmans office out

Vſe 1. Non eſt crudelior in orbe terrarum ira, quam Eccleſia ſanguinaria & hypocritarum: Nam in politica ira eſt aliquid humani reliquum. Nullus tam immanis latro ad ſupplicium rapitur, quin aliqua commiſeratione tanguntur homines: Sed cum falſa illa & ſanguinaria Eccleſia in filium veræ Eccleſiæ inciderit, non ſatis ei eſt

out of his hand too, and muſt bee whipping them with his own hands; And malicious *Story* forgetting the gravity of his Doctorſhip, muſt be throwing Faggots at the faces of the Martyrs, when bound to the ſtake to be burned. What is to be *abſurd* and *unreaſonable*, if this be not? Murtherers, and bloody cut-throats ſhall find more legall and formall proceedings at their hands, than the maintainers of the Goſpell, and Gods truth ſhall do at their tribunals. To be ſure, *Barrabas* ſhall find more favour, and leſſe hatred than *Chriſt*.

effudiſſe ſanguinem, etiam male dicit, execratur, devovet, & in miſerum cadaver ſævit, itaque ira falſæ eccleſiæ, & furor phariſaicus eſt furor plane diabolicus. *Luther in Gen. cap. 4*

Iudge by this what may be lookt for, if ever the Romiſh *Ananias* ſhould get head amongſt us againe: *Ananias* his ſpirit lives ſtill in that chaire of peſtilence. If ever therefore wee ſhould come under his fingers, looke neither for law, nor reaſon, honeſty, nor equity, look for nothing but the weight of his fiſts. *Vſe 2.*

Thus have we ſeen the enemies impetuouſnes in this point, and we may yet ſee a little more in the next. Therfore further in the third place obſerve.

Ananias commands to ſmite *Paul*. A falſe Prieſt to ſmite a true Apoſtle. Never do Gods faithfull ſervants ſuffer harder meaſure than from ſuch. Who *ſmites* *Doct. 3.*

Micaiah, but that counterfeit Enthuſiaſt *Zidkiah*, 1 *King*. 22. Well might he come in with his horns. They were emblematicall, & better ſignes of the malice of his heart, than of the truth of his prophecie. There be no ſuch horned beaſts that puſh ſo dangerouſly againſt Gods true Prophets, as Satans falſe prophets are, *Ier*. 20. *Ieremy* is buffeted and ſtocked, and who is the deed doer? *Paſhur* the Prieſt. See *Ier*. 26. 8, 11, 16. The prophet finds more reaſon & faire dealing from the Princes, and the people, than from the Prieſts, and the prophets. Theſe were fiercely bent againſt him, & nothing would quench the wolves thirſt, but the prophets blood. *Pilate* can find no fault in Chriſt; yea ſeeks to deliver him; *but the chief Prieſts & the Elders perſwaded the multitude that they ſhould ask Barabbas & deſtroy Ieſus*, *Mat*. 27 20. How wofull a caſe was it, that more juſtice and equity ſhould be in an heathen *Pilat*, than in the Prieſts? How well would it have become them to have ſticked, and ſtood for Chriſt, if *Pilate* had ſought his life, rather than that an Heathen ſhould plead for him, whilſt thoſe that glory that they are the Prieſts of God, ſhould ſeeke the murther of Gods Son. What a pittifull caſe

caſe that *Pilate* ſhould be the Iew, and the Prieſts the Heathens? Therefore is *Pauls* Preface in his anſwer before *Agrippa* worth the noting. *Act.*26.2. *I thinke my ſelfe happy King Agrippa, becauſe I ſhall anſwer for my ſelfe this day before thee.* Why, what was *Agrippa?* He was an heathen man: Why then ſhould he think himſelfe happy to anſwer before him? Had he not been happier if he might have anſwered the matter before the high Prieſt? No; for *Agrippa* gives him liberty to ſpeak for himſelf, *Act.*26.1. *Then ſaid Agrippa to Paul, thou art permitted to ſpeake for thy ſelfe.* But *Ananias* the high Prieſt layes him on the mouth, when having leave hee begins to ſpeake for himſelfe. There is more hope of reaſon, and faire proceeding from heathen *Agrippa*, than from *Ananias*. There be no ſuch virulent, and violent enemies againſt Gods truth and ſervants as are degenerate, and counterfeit friends, and amongſt thoſe ſtill they be the bittereſt, whom it behooved to be the beſt. The bittereſt enemies againſt the Church, are thoſe within her owne bowels.

Ananias was an uſurper of the office of the Prieſthood, and mark how he carries *Doct.* 4.

himſelfe in the place. He commands *Paul* to be ſmitten. Vſurpers commonly are ſmiters, and uſurpation is uſually attended with violence. Such as the entrance, ſuch the adminiſtration. We ſee it true in *Abimelech* and *Athalia*. That as it is ſaid of Pope *Bonif.* the eight, that he *entred like a Foxe, raigned like a Lyon, &c.* So was it with *Ananias*, hee had a Foxes entrance, hee came not to the Prieſthood by an hereditary ſucceſſion, but as the faſhion then was by ſimony, bribery, and flattery, and now ſee how he raignes like a Lion, and commands *Paul* to be ſmitten on the mouth. An ill entrance into any place of office, in Church, or Common-wealth, cannot promiſe any good in the adminiſtration thereof.

Integritas præſidentiſi eſt talus ſubditorũ, principatus autẽ quem ambitus occupavit, etiam ſi moribus, atque actibus non offendit, ipſius tamen initij ſiu eſt perniciosus exemplo: & difficile eſt ut bono peragantur exitu, quæ malo ſunt inducta principio, ex Decret.

Doct. 5.

See what wofull times here were, what bitterneſſe, what madneſſe againſt a good conſcience. And theſe were the times that did a little fore-run the fatall & fearfull ruine and deſolation of *Ieruſalem*, and the Nation of the Iewes. *Ananias* his deadly hatred of goodneſſe, and good conſcience, was a bud of the fig-tree, that the particular Iudgement of *Ieruſalem* was even at the doores. *When the rod is bloſſomed, and pride hath budded, and violence*, ſpecially againſt

againſt good conſcience *is riſen up into a rod of wickednes*, then may it truly be ſaid, *Behold the day, behold it is come, The time is come, the day drawes neere*, *Ezec.* 7. 10, 11, 12. By *Bede* deſcribing the ancient deſtruction of this kingdome of *Britain*, this is made a fore-runner therof, *The hatred of the profeſſors of the truth, as of ſubverters, all the ſpite and hate was againſt them*. Our Saviour tels his Diſciples, *Luk.* 21. 11. *of fearfull ſights and great ſignes* that ſhould be from heaven; before the deſtruction of *Ieruſalem*. And ſo there was a fearfull comet, & many other prodigious things before the ſame. Now if the Iewes had had hearts to have conſidered it, this cordiall malignity on every hand againſt good cõſciẽce was as ſad a Prognoſticator of their approaching ruine, as any blazing ſtar, or terrible ſight whatſoever. It is an ill preſage of a Nation going down, when once good conſcience is fiſted downe.

Odium in veritatis profeſſores tanquã ſubverſores omnia tela & odium in hos. *Bed. hiſt. gent. Ang. l.* 1. *cap.* 14.

Chap. XVIII.

The ſeverity of Gods juſtice upon the enemies of a good conſcience, and the uſuall equity of Gods adminiſtration in his executions of juſtice.

THus have wee ſeene *Paul* fiſted, and laid on the mouth. How doth *Paul*

now take this blow at *Ananias* hands? He ſmites not againe, nor offers to repell one violence with another, he had learned of Chriſt rather to have turned his other cheeke to him. But yet though hee ſmite him not with the fiſt, yet he ſmites with a checke and a juſt reproofe for his violence. And ſo may a man ſmite without tranſgreſſion, and without revenge, *Pſal.* 141.5. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall not breake mine head.* So may a man ſmite, and yet be a righteous man. Theſe blows are not to breake heads, as *Ananias* his blowes are, but theſe are to breake hard hearts. Thus *Paul* ſmites without tranſgreſſion of the bonds of meekneſſe and patience. And ſo we are now come to the third maine point in the text, *Pauls* zealous anſwer, and *conteſtation.*

Verſ. 3. *Then ſaid Paul unto him, God ſhall ſmite thee thou whited wall.*

The conteſtation is contained in the whole verſe. And in this conteſtation we have a denunciation of judgement, & that haply by a Propheticall an Apoſtolicall ſpirit, propheſying to him what ſhould befall him; not an imprecation out of a private ſpirit ſtirred with a deſire of revenge, *God ſhall* or *will ſmite*, not, I pra-

God

God ſmite, or I hope to ſee the day when God ſhall ſmite, but *God ſhall ſmite*. As if he had ſaid, well *Ananias*, thou haſt ſmitten me, heare now what thy doome from God is, I am ſent to thee with heavie tydings: God wil call thee to reckoning for this blow, and Gods hand is over thine head to pay thee in thine owne kind. So then from the whole learne thus much.

Chriſtian patience, though it bind a mans hands, yet doth it not alwayes bind a mans tongue. Though it lay a Law upon a man to forbeare violence, yet layes it not a Law upon him alwayes to enjoyne him ſilence. Though a man in *Pauls* caſe may not ſtrike, yet hee may ſpeake. Though Religion pinion a mans armes from ſtriking, yet doth it not ſow & ſeale up a mans lips from ſpeaking. *Ananias* hath ſmitten *Paul* on the face, and if it pleaſe him to have another blow, he will not reſiſt him, hee hath his other cheeke ready for him, if his fingers itch to be doing; but yet for all this, though *Paul* hold his hands, hee doth not hold his peace. Indeed *Chriſts* precept is well known, *Math.* 5.39. *Turne the other cheeke alſo*, but yet for all that, ſee what his practice was when he was ſmitten, *Ioh.* 18.23. Ieſus anſwered him,

Doct.

If I have spoken evill, beare witnesse of the evill, but if well, why smitest thou me? And yet his precept and practice doe not interfeire, nor crosse shinnes. For though by his precept hee forbids us to retaliate, or recompence injury with injury, out of the heat of a vindictive spirit, yet by his practice he warrants us in cases of injury to make a manifestation both of our own innocencie, and others injustice. Religion binds no man to be a Traytour to his own innocencie, and the justice of his cause, and by silence to abet others injustice. With a good conscience may a man speake, so long as hee speakes as *Paul* did before *Festus, Act.* 26. 25. *The words of truth and soberneſſe.* So a man answer truly, soberly, without tacks of gall, and impatient touches of revenge. Christ and Religion say to a man convented, and injuriously proceeded against, as *Agrippa* did to *Paul, Act.* 26. 1. *Thou art permitted to speak for thy self.* This in generall, more particularly. in this Denunciation, Consider the judgement denounced, that is this, *God shall smite thee.* From which we may observe two things, First:

Doct. 1 *See Gods judgements, and the severity of his justice against the enemies of a good conscience,*

ſcience, and his faithfull ſervants. *Ananias* ſmites *Paul*, and for his good conſcience, and what gets hee by it? God will ſmite him, and give him as good as hee brings. *God will ſmite ſmiters.* *Ananias* ſmites *Paul*, and Gods will ſmite *Ananias*; yea, and God did ſmite *Ananias*, for he was afterwards ſlaine by *Manaimus*, one of the Captaines of the Iewes.

It is a dangerous thing not to ſmite when God commands, 1 *King*. 20. 35, 36. He that would not ſmite a Prophet when God commanded, was ſmitten with an heavie judgement. It is no leſſe dangerous to ſmite when God forbids ſmiting; God hath an heavie hand for thoſe that are ſo light fingred, and he will give them blow for blow that will bee ſmiting his for a good conſcience.

Touch not mine anoynted, and do my Prophets no harm, *Pſ*. 105. 15. He that touches them, touches *the apple of Gods eye*, *Zach*. 2. 8. So hee that ſmites them, ſmites the apple of his eye. The eie is a tender place, and ſenſible of a little blow. God will not take a blow on the eye, nor beare a blow on his face at the hands of the proudeſt enemies of them all, and though we muſt turne the other cheek rather than ſmite againe,

gaine, yet the Lord to whom vengeance belongs, wil take no blows at their hands, but if they will be ſmiting, they ſhall be ſure to heare of him to their coſt.

You find *Ex.*2.11.an Ægyptian ſmiting an Iſraelite. It becomes none better than Ægyptians to be ſmiting Iſraelites. *Moſes* ſpies an Ægyptian ſmiting of an Hebrew. What gets the Ægyptian in the end? See verſe 12. God ſtirs up the ſpirit of *Moſes* to ſmite him, and to ſlay him. Thus will God teach Ægyptians to be medling. *Paſhur* ſmites *Ieremy*, *Ier.* 20.2. What got he by it? The heavie ſtroke of Gods hand upon himſelfe and all his friends, *ver.*3,4, 5,6. *Herod* was a ſmiter too, *Act.*12.1,2. *He ſtretched forth his hands to vexe certain of the Church, and he killed Iames the Brother of Iohn with the Sword.* And what became of him in the end? See ver.23. *The Angel of the Lord ſmote him, & he was eaten up of worms, and he gave up the ghoſt.* It is ſaid of *Ionas* his gourd that a worme ſmote it, and it withered, *Ion.*4. That was much that a worme ſhould ſo ſoone ſmite the gourd. But when men will be ſmiting Gods people, and his prophets for a good conſcience, and when *Herod* will be ſo buſie as to ſmite Apoſtles, God can ſend not only

onely an Angel, one of his moſt glorious creatures, but even a baſe worme, even one of the weakeſt creatures to ſmite *Herod*, and eate him both. *Ieroboam* ſtretches forth his arme againſt the Prophet, 1 *Kin.* 13. & his arm withers, he doth but threatē to ſmite, & God ſmites him. How much more when *Herod* ſtretches forth his hād to vexe the Church, and to ſmite Gods Miniſters, wil God not only wither them, but ſmite him, as *Sampſon* ſmote the Philiſtims, *hip and thigh*, and make him a rotten and a ſtinking ſpectacle to all malicious ſmiters to the worlds end.

Thus is that true which the Prophet implies in that ſpeech, *Iſa.* 27. 6. *Hath hee ſmitten him as hee ſmote his ſmiter?* Marke then Gods dealing, hee uſes to ſmite ſmiters.

Neither is this true only of ſmiters with the fiſt, and with the ſword, but it is alſo true of thoſe *ſmiters*, *Ier.* 18. 18. *Come, and let us ſmite him with the tongue.* Even ſuch ſmiters will God ſmite alſo, as wee may ſee there, *ver.* 21, 22, 23. Thus God met with *Nabal*, *David* ſends for reliefe to him upon his feſtivall day, and he in ſtead of an almes fals a railing on him, and cals him, in effect, a Rogue, and a Vagabond,

and

and a run-away. Thus hee ſmote *David* with his tongue. What follows? See ver. 38. *And it came to paſſe about ten dayes after, that the Lord* ſmote *Nabal*. And how ſmote he him? *That he died*. So *Zach*. 14. 12. *Their tongue ſhall conſume away in their mouth*. What might the reaſon be of that judgment? Becauſe haply many that cannot, or dare not fight with their hands, for fear of the law, yet fight againſt Gods Miniſters & his ſervants with their tongues: Wel, God hath a plague to ſmite ſuch ſinners. Though they ſmite but with the tongue, yet God will ſmite them, and give them their portion with the reſt of the adverſaries of the Church. And if God will not ſpare ſuch ſmiters, how much leſſe wil he ſpare ſuch as ſmite with the ſword?

Vſe 1. Terror to all ſmiters, either with hand or tongue, Smite on, goe on in your malicious courſes, doe ſo, but yet know that there is a ſmiter in heaven that will meet with you. *Had Zimri peace who ſlew his maſter?* So ſaid *Iezabel* to *Iehu*, and ſo may it bee ſaid in this caſe. Search the Scriptures, ſearch the Hiſtories of the Church; Had ever any ſmiters peace, which lifted up either hand, or tongue againſt any of the Lords people? Did ſmiters ever ſcape

ſcot-

ſcot-free? Had they any cauſe to brag in the end? Had they ever any cauſe to brag of the laſt blow? Did *Herod* proſper that ſmote *Iames* with the ſword? did *Ananias* proſper that ſmote *Paul*? did the *Ægyptian* proſper that ſmote the *Hebrew*? Did *Doeg* proſper who was a *tongue-ſmiter*, as well as an *hand-ſmiter*, *Pſa.52.* Oh conſider this you that dare lift up your hands and tongues againſt a good conſcience, & be afraid of Gods ſmiting hand, tremble to meddle in this kind. Learne to hold your hands and tongues, unleſſe yee long to feele Gods ſmiting hand. Eſpecially take heed of ſmiting Gods Miniſters in any kind, *Deut.33.11.* *Levi* hath a ſtrange bleſſing, *Bleſſe Lord his ſubſtance, & accept the worke of his hand*, ſmite *through the loynes of them that riſe againſt him, and of them that hate him, that they riſe not again.* God ſaw, that of al others, *Levi* would be moſt ſubject to the blowes of fiſts, and tongues, and therfore he is fenced with a bleſſing for the nonce, to make ſmiters feare to meddle with him, or if they will needs meddle, yet to let them ſee that it were better to wrong any other tribe than that; God would ſmite thē, & ſmite them to the purpoſe, that ſhal offer to ſmite him.

Here

Vſe 2. Here is that which may make Gods people comfortably patient under all the wrongs & injuries of ſmiters in any kind. Here is that may make them by patience to poſſeſſe their ſoules, & may make them hold their hands and their tongues from ſmiting. Smite not thou, God will ſmite ſmiters. Indeed when we will be ſmiting, wee prevent Gods ſmiting, and ſo they have the eaſier blows by the meanes: For what are our blowes to the Lords; Do as Chriſts did, 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. *Who when hee was reviled, reviled not againe; but committed himſelf to him that judges righteouſly.* It is beſt leaving them to the Lords hand. Pray for thy ſmiters, that God would give them ſmiting hearts, that their hearts may ſmite them for their ſmiting; pray to God if he ſee it good they may be ſo ſmitten. This is a revenge will ſtand with charity. Yet if not, leave them to God who beſt knows how to ſmite ſmiters.

Vſe 3. It is great comfort againſt the ſore afflictions of Gods Church at this preſent. The enemies of the Goſpel have ſmitten Gods Church with a ſore blow. Wel, yet let us not bee out of heart, the time will aſſuredly come, that God will ſmite theſe ſmiters. The time wil undoubtedly come, when

when God will ſmite that whited wall, that Romiſh *Ananias*, that ſcarlet Whore that animates and ſets a worke thoſe ſmiters. It was low with *David* when he fled from *Abſalom*, and was glad to receive relieſe from the children of *Ammon*, 2 *Sam.* 17.27. But chap.18. *Ioab* ſmites *Abſalom* with three darts, and *David* returnes in peace, and *Pſ.*3.7. bleſſes God for *ſmiting his enemies upon the cheeke bone.* How did the Ægyptians oppreſſe and ſmite the poore Iſraelites, *Ex.*2.11. and *Ex.*5.14? But at laſt *Ex.*12. God ſmites the land of Ægypt, and the firſt born, and *Ex.*15.6. *daſhes in pieces* theſe ſmiters. See how hard it went with *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.*4.10,11. *And the Philiſtims fought, and Iſrael was ſmitten, and there was a very great ſlaughter; for there fell of Iſrael thirty thouſand footmen, and the Arke of God was taken.* Behold what a terrible blow here was given: The Prieſts ſlaine, and the Ark captived, as if God himſelfe had been taken priſoner, and yet at laſt, 1 *Sam.*5.6. God ſmites theſe ſmiters, *But the hand of God was heavie upon them, and ſmote them with Emerods*, yea as *David* ſings, *Pſal.*78.66. *Hee* ſmote *his enemies in the hinder parts, hee put them to a perpetuall reproach.* Hee

ſmites

ſmites them reprochfully. Sometimes he ſmites enemies on the cheeke bone, *Pſal.* 3.7. Somtimes he ſmites them in the hinder parts, both are diſgracefull and reprochfull, but the later the worſe, a diſgracefull thing to bee ſcourgd and whipt like boyes. Antichriſtian ſmiters do prevaile, and haply may yet much more, and may give yet ſorer blowes, but yet as in *Nebuchadnezzars* dreame, *Dan.*2.34,35. the ſtone cut out without hands *ſmote* the Image upon the feet, and brake them in pieces, ſo that the iron, braſſe, clay, gold, all became *like the chaffe of the Sommer-threſhing flores*; So wil Chriſt in his good time ſmite theſe ſmiters, ſo that their place ſhall be no more found.

Doct 2. *God ſhall ſmite thee.* Obſerve *the marvellous equity of Gods adminiſtration in the executions of his juſtice.* God fits his puniſhments to mens Sins. Here we ſee the truth of that, *Math.*7.2. *With what meaſure yee mete, It ſhall be meaſured to you againe.* If *Ananias* ſmite *Paul*, God will ſmite *Ananias*. *Smiting* was his Sin, *ſmiting* ſhall be his puniſhment. *Paul* ſayes not, God ſhall judge thee, or plague thee, but God *ſhal ſmite thee*, to teach that God doth not only juſtice upō ſinners, but that there

there is a *Retaliation* in Gods juſtice, a recompenſing with the like. That looke as amongſt the Iudicials of the Iewes there was a law of retaliation, *Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand*; that if a man wronged another with the loſſe of an eye, hee was not only to be puniſhed, but to be puniſhed in the ſelfe-ſame kind, to loſe an eye himſelfe; ſo the Lord for the moſt part followes the ſame courſe in diſpenſation of juſtice. If men *ſmite*, God will not onely puniſh, but *ſmite*.

That looke as it is in the caſe of obedience, ſo is it in the caſe of Sin. When men yield obedience to God, he not onely rewards their obedience with a recõpence, but with a recompence of *Retaliation*, *Pr.* 3.9. Honouring God with the increaſe of the fruits, is honoured from God with the recompence of the increaſe of the fruits. *Abraham* ſpares not his ſeed, therefore God will multiply his ſeed, *Gen.* 22. 16, 17. It was in *Davids* heart to build God an houſe, therefore God will build him an houſe, 2 *Sam.* 7. 2. 5. 11.

Thus it is alſo in the caſe of Sin; this is the rule the Lord proceeds by often in his Iuſtice, to meete with wicked men in their kind. As *with the mercifull he ſhews*

himſelfe mercifull, ſo with the *froward he wil ſhew himſelf froward*; *Pſ.* 18.25,26. And if men will *walk contrary* unto him, he will *walk contrary* unto them *Lev.* 26. And he will croſſe thē that croſſe him. And thoſe that will not heare when he cals, hee will not hear when they call, *Pro.* 1.24.28. For the better cleering of this point, wee may ſee the truth of it in divers particulars.

1. Gods puniſhments are in the *ſame maner*. The ſame maner of Sin, the ſame manner of puniſhment. *Ananias* ſmites *Paul* in a barbarous and a malicious manner, he himſelfe was cruelly ſmitten, and ſlaine. The Sin of the *Sodomites* was a Sin againſt nature, their puniſhment was after the ſame maner, fire deſcended from heavē. It is unnaturall for fire to come downwards. They Sin unnaturally, fire comes down unnaturally. The *Philiſtims* not only ſmite *Iſrael*, but they do it with a *ſpightfull heart*, and meerely for *Vengeance*, *Ez.* 25. 15. Therefore *ver.* 17. *I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes*. Vengeance for vengeance, maner for maner. Such was the late remarkable juſtice of God upon that Popiſh Conventicle in the City, many of that crew were fallen from God, & fallen from the truth; the

the Lord ſlaughters them by a fall. A fall was their Sin, a fall was their death, there was a fall for a fall.

2. Gods puniſhments are in the ſame kind. Look in what kind the Sin is, of the ſame kind is the puniſhment. *Sodomes* Sin was in fiery luſts, they were in their Sin ſet on fire from hell. Their puniſhment was of the ſame kind; God raines down fire from heaven upon them. A fiery Sin, and a fiery puniſhment. Memorable in this kind was the juſtice of God upon that notorious & fiery perſecutor *Stephen Gardiner*, who would not ſit downe to dinner till the news came from *Oxford* of the fire ſet to *Ridley* and *Latimer*; but before his meale was ended, God kindled a fire in his body, which ere long diſpatcht him, & made him thruſt his tongue blacke out of his mouth. Such was Gods juſtice upon *Adonibezek*, *Iudges* 1.7. in the cutting off his thumbs and his great toes. *Threeſcore and ten Kings having their thumbes and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my Table.* As *I have done*, ſo *God hath requited me*: God hath met with mee in mine owne kinde, hee hath payd mee with mine owne coyne. Thus was Gods juſtice divers waies upon

the *Ægyptians*. They threw the *Israelites* children into the waters, and stained the waters with *blood*, therefore God turnes their waters into blood. To which that place alludes, *Apo.* 16. 4, 5, 6. *And the third Angel powred out his viall upon the waters, and fountaines of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the Angel in the water say, Righteous art thou O Lord, &c. because thou hast judged thus, for they have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets; and thou hast given them blood to drinke.* Where not onely the justice of God, but also the equity thereof is magnified, not onely because God had *judged*, but because he had judged *thus*. Again, the *Ægyptians* destroy the males of the childrē, God meetes with them in their kind, hee smites the first-born throughout al *Egypt*. The *Ægyptians* drowne the *Israelites* Infants in the waters, God payes them in their kind, hee drownes the *Ægyptians* in the waters of the Red sea, there is *drowning* for *drowning*, and *waters* for *waters*. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, Sin by fire, and *Levit.* 10.2. *There went out a fire from the Lord and devoured them.*

How many fires hath the Whore of *Babylon* kindled, wherein she hath consumed

med to aſhes the Saints of God, God will plague her with an end ſuting with her ſin, *Apo.* 17. 16. ſhe her ſelf ſhall be burnt with fire. *They ſhall eate her fleſh, and burne her with fire.* There is *fire* for *fire*, *Apoc.* 9. 12. ſhee there darkens the light of the truth, with the ſmoake of hereſie and ſuperſtition; *There aroſe a ſmoak out of the pit, as the ſmoake of a great furnace, and the Sun and the ayre were darkned by reaſon of the ſmoak of the pit.* And *Apoc.* 18. 9. 18. There we find the *ſmoake of his burning.* There is *ſmoak* for *ſmoak.* God wil make her *ſmoak* in the end that hath brought ſuch a deale of ſpirituall *ſmoake* into his Church: and as that Emperour ſaid, *Let him periſh with ſmoak that ſold ſmoak*; ſo hath ſhee periſht with *ſmoak* at the laſt, that hath put out the eyes of ſo many thouſands with the *ſmoak* of hereſie and ſuperſtition. This was that juſtice of God which the Papiſts powder-Martyrs, *Catesbie*, & ſome others of them were forced to acknowledge, when they who had thought to have blowne up the State with *Powder*, were themſelves ſpoiled with *Powder*, a ſparke of fire flying into it, as they were drying it, and preparing for their defence.

Fumo pereat qui fumum vendidit.

Such is that Iuſtice of God threatned,

Hab. 2. 15, 16. *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteſt thy bottle to him, and makeſt him drunken alſo, that thou mayeſt looke on their nakedneſſe. Thou art filled with ſhame for glory, drink thou alſo, and let thy fore-skin be uncovered, the cup of the Lords right hand ſhall be turned unto thee, and ſhamefull ſpuing ſhall be on thy glory.* A good place for drunkards to think upon, eſpecially ſuch whoſe glory is their ſhame, whoſe glory is to make others drunke. They ſhall have *cup* for *cup*, *nakedneſſe* for *nakedneſſe*, *ſpuing* for *ſpuing*. As they have made others ſpue and vomit, through oppreſſion by drinke, ſo will God give them ſuch a draught of the bitter dregs, of the cup of his wrath, that ſhall make them ſpue their very hearts out, as *Ier.* 25. 27. *Drinke and be drunken, and ſpue and fall, and riſe no more, becauſe of the ſword which I will ſend amongſt you.* Of this kind was that Iuſtice of God upon *David* himſelfe. He kils *Vriah* with the *ſword*, therefore the *ſword* ſhall not depart from his houſe; He defiles the wife of *Vriah*, therfore his Concubines are defiled by *Abſalom*. This is that Iuſtice, *Apoc.* 13. 10. *He that leadeth into Captivity, ſhall go into Captivity; hee that killeth with the ſword,*

ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword. It was the moſt righteous hand of God upon *Saul,* that he that put Gods Prieſts to the ſword ſhould fall upon his owne ſword; and juſt with God that *Elymas* the Sorcerer, that would have kept the Deputy in ſpirituall, ſhould himſelfe be ſmitten with bodily blindneſſe.

3. Gods puniſhments are oft in the ſame part and member of the body, wherwith men have offended. That look as renowned *Granmer* dealt with himſelfe at his Martyrdome; That hand wherewith he had ſubſcribed to the ſixe Articles, that hand he firſt put into the fire, in an holy revenge upon himſelfe; even ſo deales the Lord very often in his juſtice; That which men have made the Inſtrument of their Sin, God makes the ſubject of his Iudgements. *Abſaloms* pride, and his weakneſſe lay where *Sampſons* ſtrength was. *Abſaloms* haire was *Abſaloms* pride, therefore *Abſaloms* haire, as it is conceived, was *Abſaloms* halter, and whileſt hee will needs ſpare the Barber a labour, hee alſo ſpares the Hangman a labour. Such was Gods juſtice upon *Sampſon* himſelfe. Hee can find none to bee the *pleaſure of his eyes,* as the Prophet ſpeaks

of his wife, *Ezek.* 24. but *Philiſtims*, *Iudg.* 14. 2, 3. and chapter 16. 1. and ſo in the love of a *Philiſtim*, *Dalilah*, he abuſes his eyes. What is the iſſue? At laſt the *Philiſtims* put out his eyes. God puniſht the abuſe of his eies with the loſſe of his eies, and thoſe eyes that loved *Philiſtims*, were pluckt out by *Philiſtims*.

Memorable in this kind was Gods juſtice upon that French King *Henry* the ſecond, who in a rage againſt a Proteſtant Counſellor cõmitted him into the hands of one of his Nobles to bee impriſoned, and that with theſe words, That *he would ſee him burned with his own eyes*. But mark the juſtice of God within a few dayes after, the ſame Noble man with a Launce put into his hands by the King, did at a tilting run the ſaid King into one of his eyes, whereof he dyed.

Of this kind was the Iuſtice of God upon *Zachary*, *Luke* 1. Offendiug with his tongue in that queſtion, *How can this bee?* he is puniſhed with the loſſe of the uſe of his tongue, and ſpeech for a time. The rich gluttons tongue had denied *Lazarus* a crum, therfore it is denied a drop of water. The ſame glutton had abuſed his tongue in gluttony and therfore his *tongue* hath

hath a peculiar torment in hell. So thoſe *Zac.* 14. 12. had their *tongues* conſumed in their *mouthes*, like enough as with their hand, ſo with their tongues they had fought againſt *Ieruſalem*.

Such was Gods Iuſtice upon *Ieroboam*, hee ſtretches forth his arme againſt the prophet, and the Lord withers it. He with his arme threatens to ſmite, & God ſmites him in his arme. Like that juſtice which was done upon the Emperour *Aurelianus*, who when he was ready to ſubſcribe, and ſet his hand to an Edict for the perſecution of the Chriſtians, was ſuddenly cramped in his knuckles, and ſo hindred from it by the judgement of God. *Euſeb. lib. 7. cap. 29.*

I may not here omit that notable inſtance of Gods juſtice upon *Rodolph*, Duke of *Suevia*, he whom the Pope ſtirred up againſt his lawfull Lord and Soveraigne, againſt his Oath to uſurpe his Crowne and Empire. This *Rodolph* in his wars for the Empire, was wounded in the right hand, of which wound he dyed, and at his death acknowledged Gods juſtice in theſe words; *You ſee*, ſaith he to his friends, *here my right hand wounded; with this right hand I ſware to my Lord* Henry *the Emperor. But the cõmand of the Pope hath brought me* Videtis manum dexteram meam de vulnere fauciam. Hac ego juravi Domi-

me to this, that laying aſide the reſpect of mine Oath, I ſhould uſurpe an honour not due to me. But what is now come of it? In that hand which hath violated mine Oath, I am wounded to death. And ſo with anguiſh of heart he ended his dayes. An example ſo much the rather to bee marked, that men may ſee how God bleſſes the Popes bleſſings, & his diſpenſation with Oaths, ſpecially whē they are given to arm men to rebellion againſt their lawfull Soveraignes.

4. The equity of Gods juſtice appeares in that, *Pro. 26, 27. Who ſo diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein, and he that rolls a ſtone, it will returne upon him.* Such was Gods juſtice upon *Haman*, he makes a gallowes for his owne necke. Hitherto wee may referre the juſtice of God, when God turnes mens beloved Sins into their puniſhments. Whoredome was the Levites Concubines Sin: *Iudges 19. 2.* and Whoredome was her death, *ver. 26.* The Lord, *Deut. 28. 27.* threatens the *botch of Ægypt*, and how frequently is the Sin of uncleannes ſmitten with the *French botch*, the fruit of the Sin? How frequent are the examples of Gods Iuſtice upō drunkards: drunkenneſſe their Sin, and drunkenneſſe their death. And ſo that Proverbe is often

no meo Hēnico ut non nocerem ei, nec inſidiarer gloriæ ejus, Sed juſſio Apoſtolica Pontificumque petitio me ad id adduxit ut juramenti tranſgreſſiōr honorem mihi indibitum uſurparem. Quis igitur finis nos exceperit, videtis quia in manu unde juramenta violavi mortale hoc vulnus accepi, &c. *Mem. Myſt. Iniq. p. 259.*

ten verified, *Prov.5.22. His owne iniquity ſhall take the wicked himſelfe, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his Sins.*

5. The equity of Gods Iuſtice appeares in this, when he makes *the place* of ſin, *the place* of puniſhment. Wee have frequent examples of this in Scripture. This was threatned *Ahab*, 1 *Kin.21.19. In the place* where dogs licked the bloud of *Naboth*, ſhall dogs licke thy bloud. And this was made good, 2 *Kin.9.26.* In *Tophet the place* where they had ſlain their Sons & Daughters, would God ſlay the *Iews*, *Ier.7.31,32.* And as their *houſes* were the places of their *ſins*, ſo ſhould their *houſes* be the *places* of their puniſhment, *Ier.19.13.* And becauſe the Sabbath was prophaned *in the gates* of *Ieruſalem*, therefore in the gates thereof would God kindle a fire, *Ierem.17.27.* And remarkable is that, *Ezek.6.13. Their ſlaine men ſhall be amongſt their Idols round about their Altars, and under every thicke Oak*, the place *where they did offer ſweet ſavor to all their Idols*. Such was the Iuſtice of God in that late blow upon the Popiſh company. In the very place where they uſed to diſhonour God, the hand of God was upon them, they were ſlaine, and their carcaſſes cruſhed in the place of their

their Maſs-worſhip, the firſt doore falling into their Maſſing place, & ſo they & their Crucifixes & Images, all daſhed together, God doing with them as with the *Egyptians*, *Num.* 33.4. not only ſmiting them, but alſo *executing judgment upō their gods*: yea not onely ſo, but executed them and their gods, in the *ſelf-ſame place*, where God had been by them ſo much diſhonoured.

6. The equity of Gods juſtice is to be ſeen in *the time* of his puniſhments. God oft makes *that time* wherin men have ſinned *the time* of his judgemēts. At the time of the Paſsover did the *Iews* crucifie *Chriſt*, and at the time of the Paſſeover was *Ieruſalem* taken. Heavie is the calamity that is befaln the Churches beyond the ſeas, the time wherein the firſt blow was given is not to be forgottē. The firſt blow was upon the Sabbath, upon that day was *Prague* loſt. What one thing have all thoſe Churches fayled in more, than in that point of the religious obſervation of that day; that day they neglected to ſanctifie by obedience, upon that day God would be ſanctified in his juſtice upon them; & *in the time* would have them reade one cauſe of their puniſhment. Neither is the time wherein God did that late juſtice upō thoſe popiſh perſons

perſons to be forgottē. It is ſomwhat, that after their Roman accoūt, it was upō their *fift of Novemb. God* would let thoſe of that Ieſuited brood ſee how good it was to blow up Parliament houſes, and happily would have them learne more loyalty and religiō, than to ſcoffe at our new holyday.

Of this kind was Gods juſtice upon one *Leaver*, who rayling on the worthy Martyr & ſervant of Chriſt, M. *Latimer*, ſaying, *that he ſaw that evill favoured knave*, Latimer, *when hee was burned, and that hee had teeth like an Horſe*, his Son the ſame houre, & at the ſame time as neer as could be gathered, wickedly hanged himſelfe. And the ſame was Gods juſtice ſeazing upon *Stephen Gardiner*, the ſame day that *Ridley* and *Latimer* were burned.

Since then there is ſuch an equity in Gods adminiſtratiō of juſtice, let it be our care and wiſedome to obſerve the ſame. Learne to comment upon Gods works of Iuſtice, and to compare mens wayes, and Gods works together. God is to have the praiſe and glory of his juſtice upon others, as well as of his mercie to our ſelves, now we ſhal then be beſt able to give God this glory, when we ſo obſerve his adminiſtration, that we may be able not only to ſay,

The

The Lord is just, but the Lord is just in this, and that particular, when we can say, as *Revel.* 16.5. not only *Righteous art thou O Lord that judgest,* but righteous art thou O Lord that *judgest thus. Thus* they sinned, and *thus* are they punished. It is good to observe all the circumstances of Gods justice, that so not onely the justice, but the wisedome and equity of Gods justice may be seen; and this is to trace the Lord by the foot: *Psal.* 68.24. Especially wee should be thus wise in personall evils that befall our selves, that by our punishment, and the circumstances thereof, we might be led to the consideration of our sins, and so might say as *Adonibezek; As I have den, so hath God rewarded me.*

Learne to give God the praise of his equity as of his justice. So doth *David, Ps.* 7.15,16,17. *I will praise the Lord* according *to his righteousnesse.*

Tremble and Sin not. Take heed how and wherein we Sin, lest by our Sins wee teach God how to punish us. Take heed of abusing thy tõgue in swearing, rayling, scoffing, lest God lay some terrible judgment upon thy tongue here, or some peculiar tormẽt upon thy tongue in hel hereafter. Take heed what measure thou measurest

reſt to others, leſt thou teach God to meaſure the ſame to thy ſelfe. Take heed that thou make not thine houſe a den of ſuing drunkards, leſt God make thine houſe to ſpue thee forth: Take heed how thou uſe thy wits, thy ſtrength; take heed of ſinning in thy Children, or any thing elſe thou haſt, leſt God make the matter of thy Sin the matter of thy puniſhment.

FINIS.

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FINIS.

UNIV. LIB. CAMB.

GOOD CONSCIENCE OR A TREATISE SHEWING THE Nature, Meanes, Markes, Benefit, and Necessitie thereof.

BY
IER: DYKE, Minister of Gods Word at Epping in Essex.

The Sixth Edition corrected.

LUKE 10. 42.
One thing is necessarie.

LONDON,
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let him threaten the vileſt vaſſall in his Court, with all the tortures that tyranny can inflict, and let him try if he can for his heart put his pooreſt ſubject into that fright and feare that now his conſcience puts him into, in the ruffe, and middſt of his jollity. But I pray what ayles he to be in this feare, in this ſo extraordinary a feare? Hee can neither reade, nor underſtand the writing upon the wall. Indeed it threatned him the loſſe of his kingdome, but hee cannot reade his threatning, hee knowes not whether they be bitter things that God writes againſt him, why may he not hope that it may bee good which is written, and why may not this hope eaſe, and abate his feare? No, no. Though he cannot reade nor underſtand the writing, yet his guilty conſcience can comment ſhrewdly upon it, and can tell him it portends no good towards him. His conſcience now tells him of his godleſſe impieties, in profaning the veſſels of the Temple of the true God, and that for this his ſacrilegious impropriation, and abuſe of holy things, God is now come to reckon with him. Thus can his conſcience do more than all his wiſe men. *All the wiſe men came in, but they could not reade the*

writing

writing, nor make knowne to the King the interpretation thereof. Dan. 5. 8. But his conſcience is wiſer than all his wiſe men, and when they are as puzzeld, that interprets to him, that this writing meanes him no good, and though he cannot reade the ſyllables, yet his conſcience gives a ſhrewd neere gueſſe at the ſubſtance of the writing; and therefore hence comes that extaſie of feare, and thoſe paroxyſmes of horror.

It was better with *Adam* after his fall. After his Sin committed, we find him in a great feare, *Gen.* 3. 8, 10. and hee hides himſelfe for feare. Now obſerve how his feare is deſcribed from the circumſtance of the time. *They heard the voyce of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the coole of the day. Luther* layes the *Emphaſis* of the aggravation of his feare, upon this word, *the wind or coole of the day.* The night indeed is naturally terrible; and darkneſſe is fearfull, whence that phraſe; *Pſ.* 91. *The terrors of the night.* But the day and the light, is a cheerfull and a comfortable creature, *Ec.* 11. 7. *Truly the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.* How is it then that in the faire day light, which gives courage and

Gravis malæ conſcientiæ, lux eſt. *Senec. ep.* 123.

comfort, that *Adam* feares, and runs into the thickets? Oh, his conſcience was become evill, and full of darkneſſe, and the darkneſſe of his conſcience turned the very light into darkneſſe, and ſo turned the comforts of the day into the terrours of the night. So that in this ſenſe it may be ſaid of an evill conſcience, which of the Lord is ſaid in another, *Pſ.* 139.12. Vnto *it the darkneſſe, and the light are both alike.* As full of feare in the light as in the dark. And beſides, the Lord came but in a gentle wind, the coole breath of the day, now what a ſmall matter is a coole wind, and that in the day time to, to put a man in a feare? Such ſmall things breed great feares in evill conſciences. In what a wofull plight would *Adam* (thinke we) have beene, if the Lord had come to him, at the dead, and darke midde-night with earth-quakes, thunder, and bluſtring tempeſt?

We may ſee the like in *Cain*. After he had defiled his conſcience with his brothers blood, in what feares, yea, what idle feares lived hee? Hee is ſo haunted with feares, that though he had lived in Paradice, yet had he lived in a land of *Nod*, in a land of *agitation*, yea, of trepidation.

Iudge

Iudge what caſe his evill conſcience made him in, by that ſpeech, *Gen.* 4. 14. *It ſhall come to paſſe, that every one that finds me ſhall ſlay me.* Surely there could not bee many yet in the world, and thoſe that were in the world, were either his parents, brethren, ſiſters, or neere kindred, his feare ſeemes to imagine multitudes of people that might meete him, yea, and that every one hee meets would murther him. What, will his Father or Mother be his executioners? What if any of his ſiſters meet him, ſhal they ſlay him? is not ſuch a ſwaſh-buckler as he, able to make good his party with them? Lo what fearfull, and terrible things a guilty conſcience projects.

As an evill conſcience is miſerable in its *feares*, ſo in thoſe *perplexities* which this feare breeds. Theſe perplexities doe miſerably and reſtleſſely diſtract a man. *Iſay.* 57. 20. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt.* What is the reaſon of theſe troubleſome perplexities? The want of peace of a good conſcience, *verſe* 21. *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The winds make the ſea reſtleſſe, and ſtirre it to the very bot-

tome, ſo as the waters caſt up mire and dirt. See in the troubled Sea, the Emblem of a troubled conſcience.

But the *Torment* exceeds all, and the maine miſery of an evill conſcience lies in that. It is a miſery to be in feare, a miſery to have inward turbulencie, and commotions, but to be alwayes on the racke, alwayes on the Strapado, this is far more truly the ſuburbs of Hell, than is the Popiſh purgatory. Oh! the gripes, and girds, the ſtitches, and twitches, the throwes, and pangs of a galling, and a guilty conſcience. So ſore they are, and ſo unſufferable, that *Iudas* ſeeks eaſe with an halter, and thinks hanging eaſe in compariſon of the torture of his evill conſcience. All the racks, wheeles, wild horſes, hot pincers, ſcalding leade powred into the moſt tender, and ſenſible parts of the body, yea, all the mercileſſe, barbarous, and inhumane cruelties of the *holy houſe*, are but flea-bitings, meere toyes, and May-games, compared with the torment that an evill conſcience wil put a man to, when it is awakened. It is no wonder that *Iudas* hangs himſelfe, it had been a great wonder rather if hee had not hangd himſelfe.

Pœna autem vehemens, & multo ſævior illis. Quas & Cedrius gravis invenit & Radamanthus. Nocte dieque ſuum geſtare in pectore teſtem. *Iuvenal. Satyr.* 3.

The *Heathen* fabled terrible things of their

their helliſh *furies*, with their ſnakes and fiery torches, vexing and tormenting hainous, and great offenders. Theſe their *furies* were nothing elſe, but the helliſh torments of guilty conſcience, wherewith wicked perſons were continually haunted, as ſome of the wiſer of themſelves have well obſerved. All ſnakes and torches are but idle toyes, and meere trifles, to the moſt exquiſite torment of a guilty and accuſing conſcience.

The ſting of conſcience is worſe than death it ſelfe, *Apoc.9.5,6. Their torment was as the torment of a Scorpion when hee ſtrikes a man; And in thoſe dayes ſhall men ſeeke death, and ſhall not find it, and ſhall deſire to dye, and death ſhall flee from them.* Popiſh ones tormented in their conſciences by the terrible and uncomfortable doctrines of ſatisfactions, Purgatory fire, &c. which thoſe *Locuſts* doe ſo terrifie them withall, ſhould rather chuſe death, than live in ſuch an uncomfortable condition: *The ſting of death* not ſo ſmart, as the *ſting of a Scorpion* in the conſcience. The ſting of an accuſing conſcience, is like an Harlot, *Pro.7.26. More bitter than death.* And as *Salomon* there ſpeaks of the Harlot, ſo may it be ſaid of a tormenting

Nolite enim putare quêadmodum in fabulis ſæpenumero videtis, eos qui aliquid impie ſcelerateque commiſerint agitari & perterrori furiarum tædis ardentibus. Sua quemque fraus, & ſuus terror maximè vexat, ſummque ſcelus agitat amentiaque afficit. Suæ malæ cogitationes, conſcientiæque animi terrent. Hæ ſunt impiis aſſiduæ, domeſticæq; furiæ, quæ dies noctesque parentum pœnas à conſceleratiſſimis filiis repetant *Cicero pro Roſc. Amer.*

Suum quemque facinus, ſuum ſcelus, ſua audacia de ſanitate, ac mente deturbat. Hæc ſunt impiorum furiæ, flammæ, hæ faces. *Idem. L. Piſon.*

conſcience, Who ſo pleaſes God ſhall eſcape from it, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by it.

Gods deare children themſelves, many of them are not freed from trouble in their conſciences, but they have their hels in this life, *Ion.* 2. *Out of the belly of hell I cryed unto thee.* God for their triall ſpeaks bitter things unto them, and not only denies them peace, but cauſes their conſciences to be at war with them. Now when God puts his owne children to theſe trials, and diſquiets of conſcience, they are ſo bitter, and ſo biting, that had they not the grace of God to uphold and preſerve them, even they could not be ſaved from dangerous miſcarriage. *Iob* was put to this triall, and his conſcience apprehended Gods anger, and we ſhall ſee what a caſe he was in, *Iob* 6. 8,9. *O that I might have my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing I long for, even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that hee would let looſe his hands, and cut me off.* Nay, worſe, *Iob* 14.15. *Thou ſcareſt me with dreames, & terrifieſt me through viſions, ſo that my ſoul chooſes ſtrangling, and death rather than life.* Gods grace preſerves his Saints from ſelfe-murther, but yet not alwayes from impa-

impatient wiſhes; *Iob* wiſhes *ſtrangling* and chuſes it of the two, but goes no further. What wonder then that *Iudas* doth ſtrangle himſelfe, when his conſcience ſtares him in the face, when as *Iob*, with whom God is but in jeſt in compariſon, *chuſes ſtrangling*. If *Iob* wiſh it, what wonder that *Iudas* doth the deed. Conſcience doth chaſtiſe the godly but wth whips, but it laſhes the wicked with ſcorpions. Now if the whips be ſo ſmarting to *Iob*, as makes him *chuſe ſtrangling*, what wonder that the ſcorpions be ſo cutting, as makes *Iudas* ſeek reliefe at an halter.

Yea, and that which addes to the miſery of an evill conſcience, being awakned, it is ſuch a miſery as no earthly comfort can aſſwage or mitigate. Diſeaſes and diſtempers of the body though they bee terrible, yet Phyſick, ſleep, and reſt upon a mans bed, yields him ſome eaſe, and ſome comfort. Sometime in ſome griefes the cõfortable uſe of the creatures, yields a man ſome refreſhments, *Prov.* 31. 6, 7. *Give wine unto thoſe that be of heauy hearts, let him drinke, and forget his poverty, and remember his miſery no more.* But conſcience being diſquieted, finds no eaſe in theſe. *Darius* againſt his conſcience

ſuffers innocent *Daniel* to be caſt into the Lyons den. What cheere hath hee that night? *He paſſed the night in faſting, Dan.* 6.18. Not in faſting, in humiliation for his Sin, but conſcience now began to gall him, and hee having marred the feaſt of his conſcience, conſcience alſo marres his feaſting, none of his dainties will now downe, his wine is turned into gall and wormewood, no joy now in any thing. He had marred the muſick of his conſcience, and now he brooks not other muſicke. *The Inſtruments of muſicke were not brought before him.* His guilty conſcience was now awakened, and now he cannot ſleepe; *His ſleepe went from him.* So *Iob* in his conflict for conſcience hoped for eaſe in his bed, *Iob* 7.13. *My bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint.* But how was it with him? Either he could not ſleep at all, *ver.* 3.4. *Weariſome nights are appointed unto me. When I lye downe, I ſay, when ſhal I ariſe, and the night be gone? and I am full of toſſing to and fro unto the dawning of the day.* Needs muſt he toſſe, whoſe conſcience is like the Sea waves toſſed with the winds, or elſe if *Iob* did ſleepe, yet did not conſcience ſleepe, *ver.* 14. but even in his ſleepe preſented him with

with ghaſtly ſights and viſions, *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, then thou ſcareſt me with dreames, and terrifieſt mee through viſions.*

At other times when conſcience hath beene good, Gods people though their dangers have beene great, yet neither the greatneſſe, nor neerneſſe of their dangers have broken their ſleepe, *Pſ.* 3.5.7. *I laid me downe and ſlept, I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of people that have ſet themſelves againſt mee round about.* And yet if wee looke to the title of the Pſalme, *A Pſalm of David when he fled from Abſolom his Son*; one would thinke *David* ſhould have had little liſt, or leaſure to have ſlept. *Peter* thought to have been executed the next morrow by *Herod*, & though hee alſo lodged betweene a company of ruffianly ſoldiers, that happily one would feare might have done him ſome miſchiefe in his ſleep, yet how ſoundly ſleeps he that night, *Act.* 12. And holy *Bradford* was found a ſleepe, when they came to fetch him to be burnt at the ſtake. Theſe feares brake not theſe mens ſleepe. How might this come to paſſe? They did as *Pſ.* 4.8. *I will lay me downe in peace and ſleep.* He that can lie downe in the *peace* of conſcience,

ſcience, may *ſleepe* ſoundly, whatſoever cauſes of feare there be otherwiſe. But contrarily, he that cannot ly downe with the peace of conſcience, will find but little reſt and ſleepe, though his heart bee free from all other feares. Evill conſcience being awakened, will fill the heart with ſuch feares, as a man ſhall have little liberty to ſleep. Oh the ſweet ſleep that *Iacob* had, and the ſweet dreame, when he lay upon the cold earth, and had an hard ſtone under his head for his pillow. An hard lodging, and an hard pillow, but yet ſweet reſt, and ſweet communion with God. A good conſcience makes any lodging ſoft and eaſie; but downe-beds, and down-pillowes, if there be thornes in the conſcience, are but beds of thornes, and beds of nettles. The bitterneſſe of an evill conſcience diſtaſtes all the ſweets of this life, as when the mouth and tongue is furred in an hot Ague, all meates and drinks are bitter to the ſicke party. This is the miſery of an evil conſcience awakened in this life.

2. But it may be many never feele this miſery here, there is therefore the more miſery reſerved for them in hell, in the world to come. Indeed more by many thou-

thouſands go to hell like *Nabal*, than like *Iudas*; more die like ſots in *Security*, than in *deſpaire* of conſcience. Death it ſelfe cannot awaken ſome conſciences, but no ſooner come they into hel, but conſcience is there awakened to the full, never to ſleep more; and then ſhe laſhes and gaſhes to the quick, and lets men learne that forbearance was no payment. Tel many men of conſcience, and they are ready to flap one on the mouth with that profane proverbe, *Tuſh, conſcience was hanged many yeares agoe.* But the time will come, that they who have lived in evill conſcience, ſhall find the conſcience which they have counted hanged, ſhall play the cruell hangman, and tormentor with them. They ſhall find conſcience unhanged, when it ſhall bang them up in hell, when day and night it ſhall ſtretch them there upon the racke.

The torments which an evill conſcience puts the damned to in hell, are beyond the expreſſion of the tongue, and the comprehenſion of mans conceit. There be two ſpeciall things in the torments of Hell, wee have them both thrice repeated together, *Mark.9.* 44,46,48. *Where their* worme *dies not, and the* fire *is not quen-*

quenched. There is an ever-living *worme,* and never-dying *fire.* And marke that in all the three verſes the *worme* is ſet in the firſt place, as it were to teach us, that the prime and principal torment in hell is the *worme,* rather than the *fire.* And what is the *worme,* but the guilt of an evill conſcience, that ſhall lye eternally gnawing and graſping, twitching, and griping, the heart of the damned in hell? Men talke much of hell fire, and it were well they would talke more of it; but yet there is another torment forgotten, that would be thought on too. There is an *Hell worm,* as well as there is an *Hell fire.* And it may be a queſtion whether of the two is the greateſt torment. And yet no great queſtion neither. For as the Heaven of Heauen, is the peace and joy of a good, ſo the very Hell of Hell, is the guilt and and worme of an evill conſcience. A man may ſafely ſay, it is better being in hell with a good conſcience, than to be in heaven, if that might be, with an evill one. Heaven without a good conſcience, what is it better than hel? Paradice was an heaven on earth, but when *Adam* had loſt the Paradice of a good conſcience, what joy did paradice, & the pleaſures of the garde afford

afford him more, than if he had beene in ſome ſad and ſolitary Deſert? A good conſcience makes a Deſert a Paradice, an evill one turnes a Paradice into a Deſert. A good conſcience makes Hell to be no Hell, and an evil one makes Heaven to be no Heaven. Both the happines, and miſery of Heaven and Hell, are from the inward frame of the conſcience. The Hell of Hell, is the worm of Hell, and that worm is the worm of an evill conſcience, which if it be not wormed out, and ſo the conſcience in this life made good, it will be an immortall worme in Hell.

The helliſh deſpaire wherewith the damned are overwhelmed, comes rather from this *worm*, than from the *fire*. Whoſe *worm* dies not, and whoſe *fire* is not quenched. The *fire* of Hell never quenches, becauſe the *worme* of Hell never dies. If the *worme* of Hell would die, the *fire* of Hell would go out. For if there were no guilt, there ſhould be no puniſhment. So that the very Hell of Hell, is that ſelf-torment which an evill conſcience breeds.

Now then all this conſidered, how powerfully ſhould it move us to labour for a good conſcience. Thou that goeſt on in thine evill courſes, and hateſt to be refor-

reformed and reclamed, do but bethinke thy ſelfe, if God ſhould awaken thy conſcience, in what miſery thou ſhouldſt live here, what an hell to have a falſe conſcience? what a hell on earth to be alwayes under the accuſations, inditements, and terrors of conſcience, and to live *Cain* like in the land of *Nod*, in a continuall reſtleſſe agitation.

But eſpecially as thou feareſt that everliving and ever grabbing worme, ſo have a care to get a good conſcience. Greene & raw fruits breed Cheſtworms, which if heed be not taken, will eate the very maw thorow. A dead body and a putrified corrupt carcaſſe, breeds worms that ly gnawing at it in the grave. The forbidden and raw fruits of Sin are thoſe which breed Cheſtwormes in the conſcience. The corruptions of the ſoule, and dead workes are thoſe that breed this living worme, take heed therfore of medling with theſe fruits that will breed this worme, and get thy conſcience purged from dead works, get this worme killed with the ſooneſt, for if thou letteſt it live till thou dye, it will never die at all, and will put thee to thoſe exquiſite torments, from which to be freed, thou wouldſt willing-

Vt ex crudi-tate febres naſcuntur, & vermes quãdo quis ci-bum ſumſit intemperan ter, ita ſi quis peccata peccatis accumulet, nec deo quot ea pœnetentia, ſed miſceat peccata peccatis, crudi tatem contrahit veterum & recentium delictorum ig. ne adu etur proprio, & vermibus conſumetur. Ignis eſt quẽ generat mœſtitia delictorum, vermis eſt eo quod irrationabilia animi peccata, mentem pungunt, & viſcera exedant, vermes ex unoque naſcuntur tanquam ex corpore peccatoris, hic vermis non morietur, &c. *Ambr. lib. 7. in Luk. c. 14.*

willingly ſuffer ten thouſand of the moſt cruel deaths that the wit of man were able to invent.

As then I ſay thou feareſt this *worme* of Hell, ſo get a good conſcience. Drink downe every morning a hearty draught of Chriſts blood, which may make this worme burſt. And when once this worm is burſt and voyded, and the conſcience well purged by Chriſts blood, take heed ever after of eating thoſe raw fruits that will breed new wormes. Lead ſo holy, ſo upright, and ſo conſcionable a life, that thou mayeſt not by thy freſh Sins clog thy conſcience with freſh guilt. Get thy conſcience purged by Chriſts blood, and thy converſation framed by Gods Word. *Thy words were found by me, and I did eate them, Ier.* 15.16. Do thou ſo, eat no more the unwholeſome and worme-breeding fruits of Sin; but *drinke* Chriſts blood, and *eate* Gods Word, and they both ſhall purifie and ſcoure thy conſcience from all ſuch ſtuffe, as may breed and feed the Hell-worme of an evill conſcience.

CHAP.